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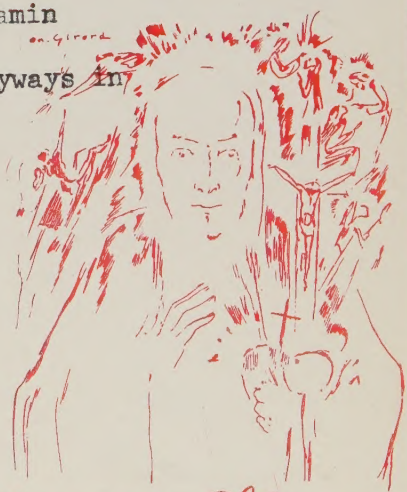

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HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

IN

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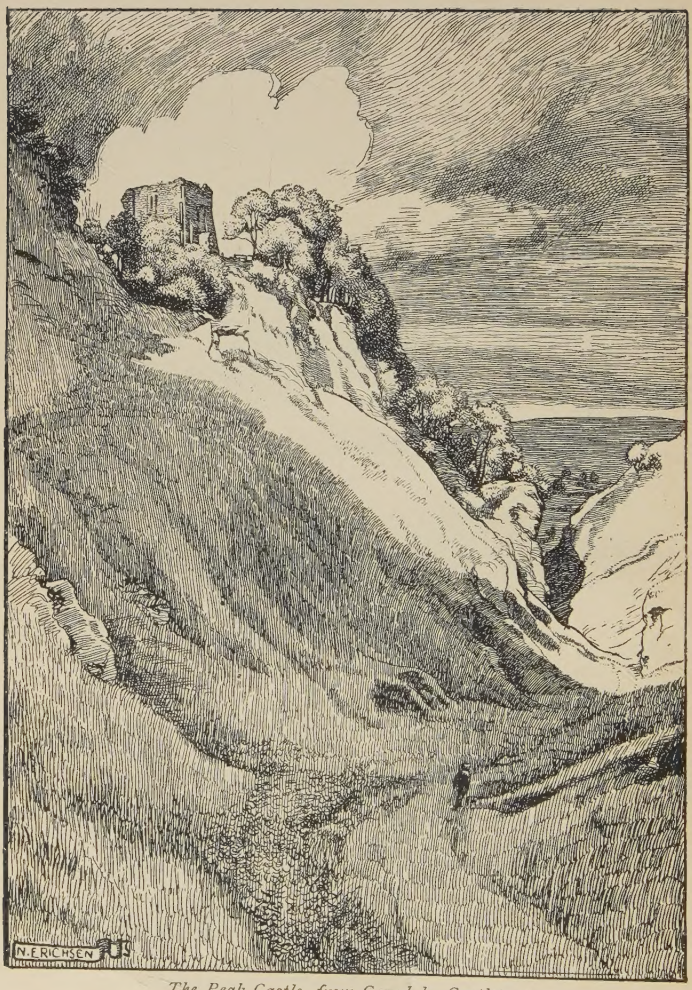

The Peak Castle, from Cavedale, Castleton.

Highways and Byways in Derbyshire

BY J. B. FIRTH
WITH · ILLUSTRATIONS · BY
NELLY ERICHSEN

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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1908

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TO

H. G. F.

MY DEAR WIFE

PREFACE

Only a brief preface is needed to explain the standpoint from which this book has been written. It is a book of narration rather than description, though the latter is not wholly wanting. The traveller can see with his own eyes and admire, according to his own standards, the delightful scenery of Derbyshire; but the associations of the hills and dales and pleasant little towns and villages of the High and Low Peak and the river valleys—these he may not have leisure or patience to search out for himself. I have not closely described the show places of the county—numberless guidebooks happily render this unnecessary—but I have attempted to enable the stranger to find without trouble his way about Derbyshire, especially if he go afoot and prefer the byways to the white limestone highways, dusty in hot weather and thick with clinging "Derbyshire cream" after rain. This involves some iteration of direction which may, I fear, sometimes prove a little tedious to the reader in his chair, and for which I crave his indulgence. My route is an arbitrary one and does not cover the entire county, yet it winds its way into most of Derbyshire's fairest and most characteristic scenes.

Of natural history and geology there is frankly nothing in this book, of science nothing, of sport nothing. Those again whose hobby is church architecture must consult the erudite and

standard work of Dr. J. C. Cox, a monument of research. But the literary and historical associations of Derbyshire—its more human side, if I may so describe it—are, I hope, not inadequately dealt with.

My obligations are many. I have made free use of all books, old and new, relating to Derbyshire, and have borrowed liberally from the volumes of the Notts and Derbyshire Archæological Society, which is fortunate, above most county societies, in the energy and numbers of its members and contributors. I am also more particularly indebted to Mr. Edward Hunter, of Ashbourne, for permission to use a short manuscript in his possession by the late Lord Denman, to Dr. Wrench, of Baslow, and Mr. Wright, of Longstone Hall, for much local information, and to Miss Erichsen not only for the charm of her illustrations but for numerous interesting details relating to persons and places. Nor would I forget to thank the many chance and momentary acquaintances whom I met on the roads and in the fields of Derbyshire and, perhaps, wearied by my questioning curiosity.

J. B. FIRTH

LONDON,
February, 1905

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HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

IN

DERBYSHIRE

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CHAPTER I

"God, who is truly thaumaturgus, the only worker of wonders, hath more manifested his might in this than in any other county of England." So wrote Dr. Thomas Fuller in praise of Derbyshire two centuries and a half ago. Had he been a Peakrill himself, his eulogy might be suspected of undue partiality, but he belonged to another shire, and the author of *British Worthies* always spoke his true mind. He was thinking, no doubt, of the Seven Wonders of the Peak, which, in his day, before men were *blasés* with travel and books of travel, did actually create wonder and a sense of awe. But he was also thinking, we may be sure, of Derbyshire's bold hills and deep limestone valleys, of her heathy moors and rich, luxuriant plains, of all the varied delights which combine to make the county so popular with seekers after health and pleasure. For, however brief their stay, no one can help being sensible of Derbyshire's charm or can resist the spell of its fascination. The better the knowledge, and the more searching the exploration, the more a man admires and the more eagerly he returns. And though he travel far afield, he still finds

Byron's saying true: "I assure you there are things in Derbyshire as noble as in Greece or Switzerland." It has no glory of coast like Devon and Yorkshire, no jewelled lakes like Westmoreland and Cumberland, but in all else that is picturesque and beautiful Derbyshire is unsurpassed among the fair counties of England.

Derbyshire is a county of contrasts—the northern half a land of hills and moors and green dales, the southern a land of pleasant meadows and broad champaign. The Trent

> "Who, like some earth-born giant, spreads
> His thirty arms along the indented meads,"

flows from west to east and bisects this southern portion, receiving the waters of all the principal rivers and streams of the county. The little Mease, Leicestershire-born, joins the Trent at Croxall after forming for a few miles the south-west boundary. At Newton Solney, near Burton, the Dove, "Princess of Rivers" as Charles Cotton called her, who keeps the boundary between Derbyshire and Staffordshire during the whole of her sparkling course, loses herself in the larger stream. At Wilne, near the south-eastern corner of the shire, Derbyshire's chief river, the Derwent, which has flowed down through the centre of the county, swells the Trent, and lastly the Erewash enters, born on the edge of Sherwood Forest, near Kirkby, and its left bank in Nottinghamshire throughout. The Dove rises on the south-eastern slope of Axe Edge, near Buxton, but its chief tributaries are all cradled on the Staffordshire hills. The Derwent has its springs on the Langsett Moor, below Bleaklow Hill on the Yorkshire border, and brings down to Trent the waters of many a score of breezy uplands. Chief among these are the Ashop and the Alport, which enter Derwent before it reaches the Vale of Hope. The Noe flows in from Edale, the Barbrook from the East Moors, and below Rowsley Bridge the Wye appears, newly strengthened by the joint waters of the Bradford and the Lathkill. This is the Dove's chief rival in

beauty from its source on the hill above Buxton, along its rocky channel through Ashwood Dale and Miller's Dale to Monsal Dale, to where, after rounding Fin Cop, it winds through the meadows of Ashford and Bakewell past the towers of Haddon Hall. Then the Derwent enjoys a smooth course down Darley Dale to Matlock, forces a way through the gorge of Matlock Bath beneath the crest of Masson, and flows below the waving woods of Alderwasley to Ambergate, where the Amber joins it, a bright stream dawdling by circuitous route from the high ground above Ashover. From Ambergate, the true gate of the Peak, the Derwent runs due south through Belper and Duffield to Derby, and then, for its last ten miles, turns almost at right angles to the south-east till it enters the Trent at Wilne.

Such are Derbyshire's principal rivers—the rivers which we propose to follow somewhat closely in our journeying. The Erewash valley we shall not enter at all, nor shall we pursue the course of the Goyt, which rises on the north-western slope of Axe Edge and flows down into Cheshire, or of the Rother, which hurries through Chesterfield to Rotherham on its way to the Don and Humber. For a few miles we shall keep touch with the Trent, then track the Dove along the Staffordshire border to its trickling spring near Buxton, and pass through Chapel-en-le-Frith and Hayfield, over Kinderscout to the Ashop and the Derwent. Then we shall travel with the Derwent down to Ambergate, making excursions up the Amber to Wingfield and Ashover and within sight of Chesterfield's crooked steeple, and thoroughly exploring the Wye and the uplands and valleys which intervene between Wye and Dove, and Wye and Derwent. This is the tourist's Derbyshire: to discover its bright beauties one has but to follow its streams.

There are, indeed, three Derbyshires. The first is the Derbyshire of the Trent Valley, including therein all the county south of Trent and the large tract lying north of it to an imaginary line, drawn from the Dove near Ashbourne, through Belper, to

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE.
Natural Scale, 1:264,000.
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3 4
Heights in feet thus:- 1088
Contours 900
Penfrich
Heage
Ripley
Codnor
Belper
Eastwood
Heanor
Milford
Derwent R.
Ham
Fenny Bentley
Kniveton
Kirk Ireton
Blore
Mapleton
Ashbourne
Bradley
Snelston
Ellastone
Norbury
Roston
Rocester
Marston Montgomery
Great Cubley
Boyleston
Doveridge
Sudbury
Uttoxeter
Tutbury
Marston upon Dove
Hilton
Willington
Eggington
Brailsford
Kedleston Park
Kedleston
Quarndon
Duffield
Kirk Langley
Mackworth
Radbourne
Derby
Ilkeston
Trowell
Sandiacre
Risley
Long Eaton
Alvaston
Osmaston
Mickleover
Etwall
Findern
Twyford
Barrow
Swarkeston
Chellaston
Shardlow
Great Wilnes
Little Wilne
Cavendish Bridge
Ratcliffe upon Soar
Castle Donnington
Stanton
Ingleby
Foremark
Repton
Newton Solney
Burton upon Trent
Melbourne
Kegworth
LEICESTERSHIRE
Breedon
Calke
Breaby
Donnington Hall
Trent R.
Dove R.
Derwent R.
Soar R.
Trent Junc.

the Erewash Valley at Codnor and Heanor. Most of this is purely agricultural land, rich in tilth and fruitful of corn in the old days—Derbyshire Felix, as it used to be called in distinction from Derbyshire Deserta, the Morelands or moorlands of the Peak. This is not much visited by strangers, though, as we shall see, the Melbourne and Repton country is full of interest and quiet beauty, and there are pretty places, which we do not touch, in the neighbourhood of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and historic houses at Bretby and Calke. The Erewash Valley, from Long Eaton to Ilkeston, Ironville – ominous name—and Pinxton, has been ruthlessly industrialised, and though the broad district between Ashbourne and Derby has escaped this unhappy fate, it has fewer attractions and historical associations than any part of Derbyshire. Those who keep close to the Dove through Tutbury, Doveridge and Norbury will lose little by ignoring the old high-road from Derby to Ashbourne. Derby itself invites a rapid approach by train.

The second Derbyshire of our division covers the Peak district in the widest extension of the term, and takes in the whole of the county lying north of Ashbourne and Belper and west of the Derwent. This includes the Glossop moors, just outside our range, the desolate Kinderscout region, the Vale of Hope, Buxton and the Wye Valley, Bakewell and Chatsworth, Matlock and Wirksworth, and Dove Dale on the western side. In this area we shall find ourselves tempted to linger, and shall gladly yield. The third Derbyshire comprises all that lies to the east of the Derwent, looking towards the Bradfield and Hallam Moors and Sheffield in the north-east corner, and then, further south, across the East Moors to Chesterfield, and, still further south, to the industrial and mining districts of Alfreton and Pinxton. This division lies for the most part outside our purview. Sheffield is the natural centre for Stanage and the Hallam Moors; the Chesterfield region is comparatively unattractive, save for Hardwick Hall and Bolsover, lying right on the Nottinghamshire border and

belonging, from the tourist point of view, rather to the Nottinghamshire "Dukeries" than to Derbyshire: while the Alfreton district is wholly spoilt. We shall be content, therefore, to explore the Amber Valley on the way to South Wingfield and Ashover.

Our Derbyshire, therefore, is not the Derbyshire of the plains, but of the hills and dales. The highest hills lie in the north-west corner and form part of the backbone of England, the great Pennine range. Kinderscout, near Hayfield, rises to 2,088 feet; Axe Edge, near Buxton, to 1,756 feet; Bleaklow, near Glossop, to 2,060 feet. These are the giants of the High Peak, not very tall, it is true, compared with real mountain giants, but imposing and dignified enough while one is in their company. Other horizons, other hills. When we are in the Peak of Derbyshire, we do not ask for anything grander or more sublime than the scene which Nature has spread before us,

> "Among the moody mountains, where they stand
> Awed with the thought of their own majesty."

But the distinguishing feature of the "Derby Hills that are so free" is the long ridge or "edge," a bold outline of continuous high ground dominating a valley. Even Kinderscout is a ridge of this character, frowning down over purple moors and black, treacherous swamps; so, too, is Axe Edge, while other famous edges worthy of special note are Coombs Edge, between Buxton and Chapel, Stanage Edge, looking down upon Hathersage, Derwent Edge, above Ashopton, and Froggatt Edge, above Calver. Sometimes they simply rise out of the plain and form big barriers with no special feature save their bulk. That is the impression which edges like those of Longstone and Rushup leave upon the mind - guardians protecting their valleys, but with no grace of woods adorning their bare sides. But others are jagged and broken, with fantastic buttresses and pinnacles of rock projecting skyward, and their slopes are strewn with boulders in token of ancient convulsion. Such are Froggatt Edge,

Gardom Edge, Birchin Edge, Derwent Edge, Middleton Edge and a score of others. Derbyshire, indeed, has very few real hills standing in conspicuous isolation from their fellows. Of these, Win Hill (1,523 feet), overlooking Hope, is my favourite, separated from its neighbours, Lose Hill and Mam Tor, by a curious break in the long ridge which divides Edale from the upper part of the Vale of Hope. The cone of Thorpe Cloud, cleft asunder from the bulk of Bunster, commands the entrance to Dove Dale; Masson climbs to solitary eminence above Matlock; and on the Staffordshire border, at Hollinsclough, is the still rarer sight of a real chain of hills, Hollins Hill, Chrome Hill, Parkhouse Hill, Hitter Hill, Aldery Cliff, and High Wheeldon, each with a clearly-marked individuality of its own.

Of the Derbyshire dales one cannot speak in terms of too much praise. Some are broad and stately valleys girt round by hills, with smaller valleys radiating from them, little towns and villages set in their midst and cultivated farms upon the hillsides. Of these, the Vale of Hope, from Castleton to below Hathersage, is at once the largest and the most beautiful, while Darley Dale, from Rowsley and Stanton to Matlock and Riber, possesses claims just as sure to second honours. The third place belongs to Edale. But the entire Derwent Valley is exquisite, notably from Derwent Hall to Ashopton, from Froggatt to Baslow and the demesne of Chatsworth, and the long stretch from Cromford to Ambergate. Of the rocky dales, where little or no room is left for tillage, and the beauty of the scene depends wholly upon the river gorge and its rocks and woods, Dove Dale, from Thorpe Cloud to Hartington, stands without a peer. High in the second class come the long gorge of the Wye from Topley Pike through Chee Dale to the entrance of Miller's Dale, the lovely reaches of the same river around Fin Cop in Monsal Dale, and the noble gorge of the Derwent from Matlock round the base of the High Tor to Matlock Bath, and from Matlock Bath to Willersley Castle and Scarthin Nick. Then, too, we have the retired dales of Derbyshire, away from

the beaten track, shy retreats unspoilt by man. Of these, the dales of the Lathkill and the Bradford are unsurpassed for sheer prettiness, and their charming streams are a never-ending delight. Other dales are dry clefts in the limestone, such as Middleton Dale, one side of which is as imposing as the other is tame and uninteresting, the romantic Deep Dale, near Buxton, Monks Dale, near Wormhill, the Winnats, near Castleton, Nabs Dale, running down from Hanson Grange to the Dove Holes, and the long wooded ravine between Cromford and Winster, through which winds the beautiful Via Gellia.

Should you tire of the valleys and desire to breathe a larger air, the moors are never far distant—moors gloriously open and grand. North of the Dore and Chinley railway, stretching away from the old Manchester and Sheffield road through Chapel-en-le-Frith, Castleton and Grindleford Bridge, spread the wildest moors, with the great towering mass of Kinderscout heavily seated upon them between Edale and Glossop. They slope across the Langsett Moors in unbroken grandeur towards Penistone—the bleakest region in all England—and over Stanage Edge and the Rivelin Moors to Sheffield. Above Grindleford Bridge a great wedge of high moorland strikes down to the southward above the left bank of Derwent, narrowing as it penetrates, till it merges into cultivation on the Tansley Moor between Matlock and Ashover Hay. It is a barren stretch, as those will find who cross it from Baslow to Sheffield over Owler Bar, or by either of the parallel highways from Baslow to Chesterfield, or by the even more deserted roads to Chesterfield which climb up out of the Derwent Valley at Rowsley, Darley and Matlock. Especially wild—even in bright sunshine—are the Beeley Moor, above the village of that name, and the Gibbet Moor, above Chatsworth, though both, as they reach the edge and begin to fall towards the valley, terminate magnificently in the paradise of woods above Chatsworth Park. The public or semi-public paths on the Baslow, Curbar and Froggatt Moors fringe the edges which command wide prospects over

the Derwent Valley; elsewhere, and noticeably in the Kinderscout region and the moors near the Derwent and Stanage Edges, jealous guards are set against intrusion. Footpaths are few—some even of these are disputed—and, if you venture, 'tis as likely as not you will find yourself stalked down by some wrathful keeper, a growling Cerberus to whom you are scarcely sure what kind of sop to throw. The farmer is much more placable if you stray than is the sporting owner, carefully counting the cost and computing the market value of every live and winged thing on his moor.

These are the real moors of heather and bracken which flame with brown and yellow and purple in the autumn. The name is also given in Derbyshire to barren, treeless tracts, covered with thin herbage, stony and desolate, or even to reclaimed moorland, enclosed and girt with grey stone walls. About a century ago, thousands of acres of ancient commons were thus enclosed in Derbyshire, and the name of moor still clings to them. On the western side of Derbyshire, north of Ashbourne and between the Dove and the Wye, stretch miles of these uplands, so bare of trees that, as an old writer put it, "Trees I doe acknowledge are soe few, in ye Peake espetially, that had Judas been there, he would have repented, before he could have found one to act his execution." The main road from Ashbourne to Buxton, as soon as it has climbed up the long hill out of Fenny Bentley, continues across these bare uplands, which are only relieved by the clumps of trees, planted in comparatively recent years, on the summits of the little hillocks, or lows, where the plateau has done its utmost to break the uniform monotony by rising to a head. Most of the old Peak Forest between Buxton and Castleton, Tideswell and Abney is also of this character, and he who seeks to know Derbyshire must not wholly ignore these bleak tracks, which often lie within less than an hour's walk of the greenest and loveliest dales.

Let it not be supposed, however, that the High Peak and

the Derbyshire Hills have always enjoyed their present fame and always attracted the lovers of the picturesque. The very contrary is the case. Rarely, indeed, before the end of the eighteenth century does one find a reference to Derbyshire which contains a word of praise for its moors and mountains. The nearest approach, perhaps, is in the curious introduction—or prolusion, as he styled it—which Philip Kinder wrote about 1663 to a projected "History of Derbyshire," that was never completed. He quaintly describes his native county as "the plastick particle of ye eggs yolke, for figure and shape ye very picture and abstract of her mother England," and as being "crowned with ye diadem of ye peake hills." And there, in the Peak, he continues, "The stupendious torrs, praecipices and casmas bring amazement, yet courted by delight, that for a time you seem to have arrested tyme with admiration. These crested rocks and proud browes of ye hills are fanned with a delicious ayre, and ye delicate breezes that pass through ye vallies are a sweete vernal zephire to refocillate and animate ye pasturage, and in winter she hath snow in plenty like a coverlid to keepe her herbage warme." Evidently Kinder loved his native hills. But his contemporaries did not—at least, not his lettered contemporaries. If they lifted up their eyes to the hills, it was not, in the spirit of the Psalmist, for strength and help, but in thankfulness that they themselves were safe in the sheltered plains. It never occurred to them to admire the combination of wild hills and moorland in which we find pleasure and delight. To them a mountain was a toilsome obstacle to climb, and a moor was an unpleasant place, apt to be boggy, affording no protection from wind and rain, without roads and inns—a place where it was easy to go astray. See, for example, how disrespectfully Michael Drayton speaks of the Peak in his *Polyolbion*:

> "But to th' unwearied Muse the Peake appears the while
> A withered beldam long, with bleared, waterish eyes,
> With many a bleak storm dimmed, which often to the skies

She cast, and oft to th' earth bowed down her aged head,
Her meagre, wrinkled face being sullied still with lead."

Or again :—

"Ye dark and hollow caves, the portraitures of Hell,
Where fogs and misty damps continually dwell."

Even Charles Cotton, Isaac Walton's friend and a loyal son of Derbyshire, exhausts his vocabulary of insult in writing of the mountains and the moors of his native county, where "Nature only suffers in disgrace":

"Like warts and wens, hills on the one side dwell
To all but natives inaccessible,
Th' other a blue scrofulous scum defiles
Flowing from th' earth's imposthumated boyles."

When he writes of Chatsworth he compares it with a bright diamond in a socket of ignoble jet,

"Environed round with Nature's shames and ills
Black heaths, wild rocks, bleak crags and naked hills."

Or again, when he is weaving a chaplet of verse for his beloved Dove, he says :—

"In this so craggy, ill-contrived a nook
Of this our little world, this pretty brook
Alas ! is all the recompense I share
For all th' intemperancies of the air,
Perpetual winter, endless solitude,
Or the society of men so rude
That it is ten times worse."

Will it be believed that the "craggy ill-contrived nook" he speaks of is none other than Dove Dale and Beresford Dale? So, when Sampson Erdeswick wrote his *Survey of Staffordshire* in 1603, he spoke of the Dove flowing past the side of Alstonefield for three or four miles "without any matter worth the noting." Those three or four miles were Dovedale ! The eighteenth century agreed in the main with the seventeenth. The "picturesque travellers," it is true, discovered the great beauty of Derbyshire valleys and dales, but the moors wearied and even disgusted them. Pilkington, who wrote in 1789,

spoke for his time when he said:—"However, though the moors of Derbyshire are in themselves so unpleasing and disgustful to the imagination, yet they serve by way of contrast to heighten the beauty of the dales and valleys by which they are intersected. The sudden and great change in the appearance of the country which these occasion fills the mind with surprise and delight." Warner, in 1802, said of the road from Castleton to Sheffield, "Nothing can be conceived more dreary, rude and forlorn for twelve miles out of the sixteen." He positively welcomed the button manufactory at Hathersage as "offering the first dawnings of the hardware trade to which we were approaching," and added: "This scene of life and business is succeeded by a tract of moor in the true style of the Salvator Rosa scenery, the line of the horizon being broken by black, rocky crags which frown over the adjacent waste." The probabilities are that he did not so much as turn his head to look back upon the Vale of Hope from the Surprise View on Millstone Edge. But then had not Horace Walpole spoken of the Alps as "uncouth rocks"?

Like country, like people! If the Peak was regarded as an uncivilised, inhospitable land, the Peakrills were thought to be little removed from savagery. From their gloomy caverns and forbidding precipices the gipsies came, according to a quaint old seventeenth century gipsy song:—

"From the famous Peak of Derby
And the Devil's Cave that's hard by;
Where we yearly make our musters
There the Gipsies throng in clusters.
Be not frightened with our fashion
Though we seem a tattered nation;
We account our Raggs our Riches,
So our tricks exceed our stitches.
Give us Bacon, rind of Walnuts,
Shell of cockels and of small nuts,
Ribbons, Bells and Saffron Linnin,
And all the world is ours to win in."

Philip Kinder, it is true, declared that "the common sort of people, out of a genuine reverence, not forced by feare or institution, doe observe those of larger fortunes, courteous and readie to show the waies and help a passenger," but Cotton, who loved the delights of London Town, found the society of the Derbyshire squires insufferably "rude," and the superior eighteenth century tourist—a modish and rather conceited person—had no good to say of the Peakrill. "I have not"—so Pilkington wrote—"in any other part of England seen or heard of so much rudeness, indecency and prophaneness," and he expressed the pious hope that the introduction of manufactures and Sunday schools would civilise the Peak, and that the natives might learn decorum and civility from the refining influence of conversation with tourists to Buxton and Matlock. Nowadays, we take the contrary view, and lament that the primitive virtues of rustic seclusion are spoilt by tourists! No doubt the Derbyshire villager, especially the miner or groover, seemed an uncouth being to the polite and fashionable stranger, who was puzzled by the local dialect, and the eighteenth century, whose philosophers invented "the natural man," only admired him in the abstract. Yet Kinder's estimate was probably much nearer the truth than Pilkington's, judging from the almost invariable kindness and hospitality which Derbyshire people show to the stranger in their midst. "Derbyshire born and Derbyshire bred; Strong in the arm and thick in the head," so runs the saying. The Peakrills were simply rough diamonds.

The truth is, that the Derbyshire roads, like those of most counties in England, were for centuries absolutely execrable, and, in a region like the Peak, communication was frequently not only difficult but dangerous. In Stuart days the road-maker simply threw the stone of the district on to the road and left it. He rarely dug drains to carry the water off, and rollers were unknown. Even in Arthur Young's days (circ. 1770) ruts were often four feet deep. As we perambulate the shire, we shall note the ancient highways which have long been super-

seded by the new, and the sight of many of these at once explains why Derbyshire remained so long an almost unknown land. Philip Kinder boasts of this isolation and congratulates Derbyshire on having no history :—

"Here is no Ackeldamas or feilds of blood, noe Theatre for Tragedies in this shire, noe battles fought, few warlick exploits, noe transaction of state, all which I take for blessing. But ye cause is there is noe strong castles, noe fortifications, whither armies may retreate, from whence they may issue. The vicinitie of Nottingham Castle and ye neighbour provinces have usurped this honour, if you call it honour or happiness to be in continual alarms. From ye high Peakish mountains, whose horizon is seen dilated, wee may, as from the mainmast of this floating iland, take a survey of ye bordering counties ; here you may see them weltering in goare and blood, with storms and tempests and thunders and devastations ; in ye interim Darbyshire solacing with ye poett in this hemistick,

'*mediis tranquillus in undis*'

calme in ye midst of ye boisterous waters."

We must not take this too literally, of course. We shall find historical associations in plenty for our purpose, burial places of ancient Britons who have bequeathed to us little more than their bones and their graves, the roads of the conquering Romans, broken memorials of Saxon piety, massive columns of Norman devotion. Here, as elsewhere, you may trace the slow course of the centuries. Yet Kinder was right, too. Derbyshire has not played a commanding part in English history. The castle of the Peverils at Castleton was never important ; Derbyshire's chief feudal strongholds lay in the lowlands not far from the borders, guarding the fords or commanding the roads thereto. Melbourne stood near the bridge over the Trent at Swarkestone ; Gresley, mid-way between Burton and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, watched the road into Leicestershire ; Duffield and Belper were well stationed on the Derwent a little north of Derby ; Codnor stood on the Erewash ; Bolsover Castle lay within easy reach of Chesterfield and the northern roads. Derbyshire's association with Mary, Queen of Scots, was due wholly to its remoteness and inaccessibility, for Elizabeth rightly judged

that her captive would be safe near the Peak. So, in the Civil Wars, Derbyshire witnessed little more than a few skirmishes, of no particular importance. Even Wingfield Manor was rather a nuisance than a menace to the local Parliamentarians, so long as Derby and Nottingham Castle were held against the King. Again, as for Derbyshire's watering-places, the springs of Matlock Bath were not discovered until the close of the seventeenth century, and Buxton, despite its antiquity, has not a hundredth part of the associations of Bath. Nevertheless, we shall find, if we but keep our eyes open, abundant relics of the past that are hallowed by old memories, beautiful churches, ancient manor-houses, noble mansions in stately parks, old farmhouses lying snug among sheltering trees. Much survives: but alas! how much more has been suffered to fall in ruin, and how many legends have slipped beyond recovery from heedless and forgetful minds! Memories are short; the traditions of the countryside are no longer handed down from generation to generation; old books grow out of date, gather dust, and their pages are turned no more.

It only remains to speak a word of the communications of Derbyshire. Railways are plentiful. The Midland main line from London to Manchester bisects the county from the south-east to the north-west, clinging to the picturesque Derwent valley from Trent to Derby, Ambergate, Bakewell and Rowsley, then threading the romantic valley of the Wye to Miller's Dale, then tunnelling under Peak Forest to Chapel-en-le-Frith and so on to Marple. Through much tamer scenery the Midland line from Sheffield to Birmingham through Chesterfield, Derby and Burton—runs down the eastern side, and the Manchester and Sheffield line of the same great system crosses the north of the county from Chinley to Dore through Edale and the Vale of Hope. On the western side the North Staffordshire railway skirts the Staffordshire boundary in a great loop from Eggington and Tutbury through Uttoxeter to Ashbourne, where the new London and North-Western line

takes up the running, clambers up to Alsop-en-le-Dale and continues at commanding altitudes high above Hartington to Buxton, whence it resumes the old track to Whaley Bridge and Stockport. These are the tourists' railways; a light railway between Grindleford Bridge and Hassop, near Bakewell, promises a useful new link of connection, and some day, no doubt, Ashbourne and Derby will be brought into more sisterly conjunction.

The wise tourist will, of course, use the railways freely, but he will not wholly depend upon them. The truth is, that you cannot see Derbyshire by rail; you cannot—this is a matter for deep thanksgiving—see it by motor; nor yet can you see it by cycle. All these are useful adjuncts, aids in the rapid annihilation of distance, but they are not self-sufficient. To see Derbyshire you must walk. The big high-roads are splendid and inspiring—ride these if you will—but the by-roads that wander up and down at random, the stony lanes where no wheel save the heavy cart-wheel goes, the tracks over the wide moors and heather, the unmapped sheep-paths over the hill-side turning here to avoid a boulder, and there to escape a patch of bog, and sometimes swerving out of the way of a mere tussock, the foot-paths by the side of streams, through meadows where the deep grasses grow, by hedges full of song—these, these are the rewards of the foot-farer, the jogging pedestrian. He hears, as from a safe retreat, the toot of the motor horn and sees a great way off the white clouds of dust rise on the high-way—the whole valley shall know that Smith is riding by—hears and envies not at all, if he has understanding of Nature and her ways, knows the joy of the "lonely mountain tops," the calm of valleys, the music of streams, or ever

> "In solitude returning, saw the hills
> Grow larger in the darkness; all alone
> Beheld the stars come out above his head,
> And travelled through the wood, with no one near
> To whom he might confess the things he saw."

The Pool Melbourne Hall.

CHAPTER II

MELBOURNE AND SWARKESTON BRIDGE

Kegworth, in Leicestershire, four miles south of Trent Junction, was my starting point, chosen for no other reason than that a dotted line on the ordnance survey map showed that I could cross from thence to Melbourne, the first place of importance in South Derbyshire, through the fields almost the whole way. In June, what attraction could be more potent? Kegworth is a pleasant little town on the banks of the Soar, and situated on the old coaching road from Loughborough and the south to Derby and Manchester, which crossed the Trent at Shardlow Bridge. I found the house in which Tom Moore lived for a time to be near his patron, Lord Moira, at Donington Park, and then, from the side of the windmill which one sees from the railway, entered the first of a long succession of fields leading to Castle Donington. These fields command a prospect over the broad Trent Valley down to the big junction at Trent, where the white smoke is for ever rising. In the distance are the tall chimneys of Long Eaton, beyond the turn

of the line of low hills which flank the Soar from Kingston to Thrumpton and then bend with the Trent towards Barton and Nottingham.

The path runs through undulating country, never rising to more than two hundred feet, and brings one out by the church of Castle Donington, a straggling town set on the side of a hill, up which climbs the steep road from Nottingham to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. There is nothing in Castle Donington to hold us—the castle mound lies at the foot of the hill and the church is of little interest—and we cross the main road to the by-road leading towards Donington Park. Then, in half-a-mile a foot-path on the left conducts us through delightful fields, whose dense hedges were white and pink with blossom as I saw them, to a gate set in a corner of the park, where a belt of magnificent trees crowns the rising ground. The path does not enter the park but keeps along the low boundary wall, over which one soon observes a remarkable group of aged oaks, gnarled into strange and fantastic shapes, some dead, others in the last flicker of life, though this last flicker may continue for half a century more. A little beyond we get a glimpse of Donington Hall, a plain, two-storeyed building with chapel attached. The whole estate has recently passed into new and wealthier hands from neighbouring Burton. It was long the seat of the Earls of Huntingdon, ancestors of the first Marquis of Hastings, who lent it to Charles X. of France during the time of his exile in England. The house enjoyed a brief blaze of celebrity in the lifetime of the last Marquis, who in a few years squandered away a noble fortune. The story of Hermit's victory in the Derby of 1867—that well-remembered struggle in a snowstorm which beggared the racing Marquis—belongs to the history of the Turf. Racing may be the sport of kings, but it is a sorry amusement on which to fling away a fine estate like Donington Park. We cross by a footbridge the drive to the Hall, and then, still keeping by the park boundary, reach more open ground by the side of a keeper's cottage. Here for the

Yew Hedges, Melbourne Hall.

first time we set foot in Derbyshire, and from here we get our first view of Melbourne on the opposite slope of the broadish valley below us. Away to our left—a long two miles distant—is a fine upstanding, church-crowned hill. This is Breedon-on-the-Hill, just inside Leicestershire, for the boundary runs between it and Melbourne. In the churchyard is the grave of the unfortunate steward whom the fourth Earl Ferrers murdered in 1760, two miles away at Staunton Harold—the last peer of the realm to be hanged at Tyburn after full trial by his peers in the House of Lords. He drove to the scaffold in a coach and six, and was hanged, it is said, with a silken cord. He was the first criminal to suffer by the "new drop" instead of the old cart, ladder, and three-cornered gibbet.

Melbourne is a curious medley, of which part is as distressingly commonplace as any newly-built country town. This we may ignore. The other half, including the church, the Hall, and the great pool, is altogether charming. Melbourne had a castle once, one of the strong places of the Midlands, but not one stone now stands upon another, save for a few unimportant fragments of the ancient wall which enclosed, it is believed, fully ten acres of ground. It dated back to Norman days, but was rebuilt at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when it passed into the hands of the Earls and Dukes of Lancaster, and from them into the possession of the Crown. John, Duke of Bourbon, of the royal line of France, languished here for nineteen years as a prisoner of war—he was taken at Agincourt—though there must have been some special reason for such prolonged detention. During the Wars of the Roses Melbourne Castle was partially dismantled by Margaret, Queen of Henry VI., and thenceforward was resigned to slow decay.

But though the castle has vanished, the cruciform church remains. It stands open to the road without enclosure, and is a magnificent example of early Norman work, with a fine central tower and two other small towers at the west end. Worthy of note are the arcades above the arches of the aisles,

The Garden, Melbourne Hall.

the three tiers of arcading in the central tower, the apsidal terminations of the transepts and the chancel—that of the chancel may be seen outside the building—and the traces of an upper chancel above the existing one, like the unique example in Compton Church, near Guildford. The monuments are disappointing, save for the inscription on a modern brass to the memory of the late vicar, the Rev. W. H. Cantrell (1808–1890). He is described as being the "last of his race," and then the Latin continues, "*Quae vitia in eo fuerint scit Deus, non ego,*" i.e. "God alone knows what his faults were; I knew them not." It is his widow who speaks. Melbourne Church used to belong to the Bishops of Carlisle, and their stone tithe barn still stands near the west end. When there was war between England and Scotland, or the freebooters on either side of the Border made Carlisle an unpleasant residence, the bishop used to come down to Melbourne, confident that the Scottish raiders would not penetrate the Derbyshire hills.

Just across the road from the east end of the church lay the rectory house, which had been annexed in the time of Henry II. to the see of Carlisle. In 1628 Sir John Coke acquired possession of it on a lease of three lives, and, in 1710, this was turned into freehold. Sir John was one of Charles I.'s principal Secretaries of State, and was made the scapegoat for that monarch's ill-fated Scottish policy. When the Civil War broke out neither party trusted him, and Melbourne Hall was occupied for some time by a Major Swallow with Parliamentary troops from Derby. His descendant, Thomas Coke, one of Queen Anne's vice-chamberlains, is thought to have been the original of the Sir Plume of Pope's bitter sarcasm :—

> Sir Plume of amber snuff-box justly vain
> And the nice conduct of a clouded cane,
> With earnest eyes and round unthinking face
> He first the snuff-box opened, then the case.

Charlotte Coke, Sir Plume's daughter, married in 1740 a Mr. Matthew Lamb, son of a Southwell solicitor, who was the

The Garden, Melbourne Hall.

Cokes' confidential adviser. His ability was great and his ambitions speedily overstepped the narrow bounds of a provincial practice. Migrating to London, he became solicitor to the Post Office, entered Parliament, bought Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire, and was made a Baronet. His wife succeeded on her brother's death to the entire Coke estate, and before Sir Matthew died, leaving a million of money, he had securely laid the foundations of a family. His son, Sir Peniston Lamb, was raised to the peerage in 1780 with the title of Baron Melbourne; his grandson was Viscount Melbourne, Queen Victoria's first Prime Minister, who, as the Hon. William Lamb —he was a younger son—married Lady Caroline Ponsonby, a daughter of the Earl of Bessborough. On the very same day his sister married Earl Cowper. Brocket was the principal seat of the family and Lady Caroline rarely visited Melbourne. We need, therefore, only just recall her mad infatuation for Byron, which was the talk of more than one London season. She met him for the first time at Lady Westmoreland's house in London. Byron was brought up to be introduced; Lady Caroline refused to acknowledge his salutation and entered in her journal that Byron was "mad, bad and dangerous to know." Shortly afterwards he was again presented to her at Holland House. This time her mood had changed; he called at Melbourne House the next day; and the intrigue began—if intrigue it can be called where there was practically no pretence of concealment. One extract may be quoted from Lady Caroline's diary describing a call which Byron made at her house. She says:—

"Rogers and Moore were standing by me. I was on the sofa. I had just come in from riding. I was filthy and heated. When Lord Byron was announced I flew out of the room to wash myself. When I returned Rogers said:—'Lord Byron, you are a happy man. Lady Caroline has been sitting in all her dirt with us, but when you were announced she flew to beautify herself.'"

"In all her dirt!" So do fastidious poets talk! However, as

subsequent events only too clearly proved, Lady Caroline was scarcely responsible for her actions. Time also disclosed with what splendid self-restraint Lord Melbourne endured what must have been a life of torture. There was only one child of this unhappy marriage, a boy who was mentally deficient and died young.

The estate then passed to Lord Melbourne's sister who had married Earl Cowper. The Earl was dead; the widowed Countess had married Lord Palmerston; and Melbourne Hall thus became associated with another of Queen Victoria's Prime Ministers. Lady Palmerston was a brilliant woman, long one of the leaders of London political society, and her drawing-room at Palmerston House, in Piccadilly, was practically the last of the great Whig salons in England. At her death Melbourne Hall passed to her son by her first marriage, and the estate is still in the possession of the Cowpers, who do not, however, reside there.

But by far the most interesting association of Melbourne Hall is that it was the place where Baxter began to write *The Saints' Everlasting Rest.* It would be rash to say that the vogue of this book is over, though the theological tastes of the present day run in other channels. New editions are rare; the copy we are nearly sure to meet in turning over the volumes on any second-hand book-stall is invariably old and brown with age. Baxter tells us in his autobiography how he came to write it. He had been serving as chaplain in one of the regiments of the Parliamentary army during the Civil War, and his health had utterly broken down. After the fashion of the day the surgeons had bled him most unmercifully, and he lay worn and weary at the house of Sir John Coke, or Cook, as Baxter spells the name. But let the author speak for himself:—

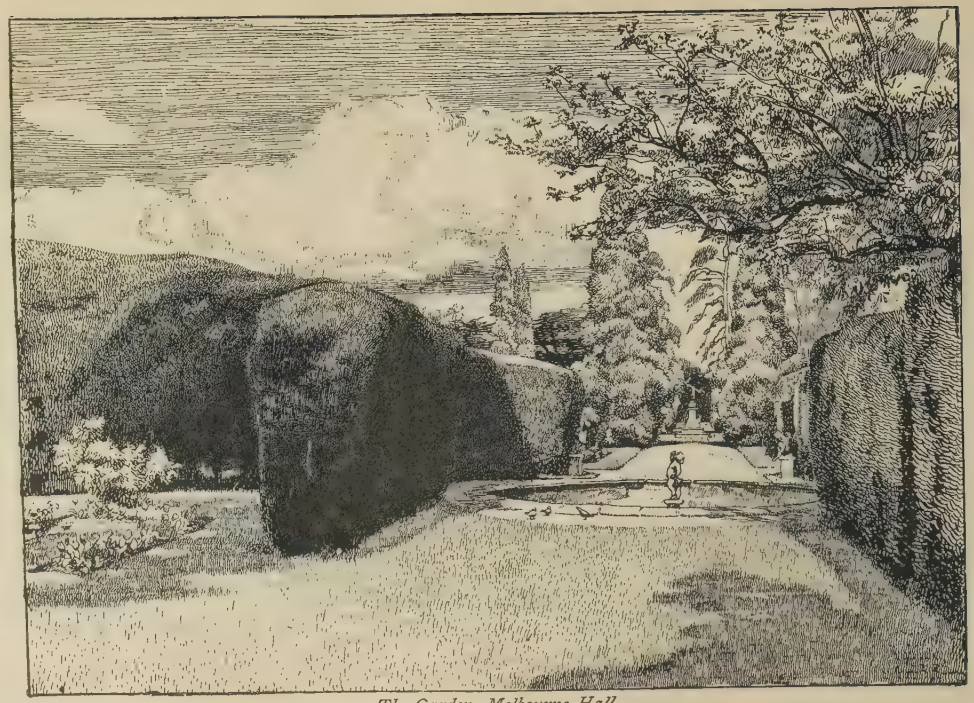
"The second book which I wrote and the first which I began was that called 'The Saints' Everlasting Rest.' Whilst I was in health I had not the least thought of writing books, or of serving GOD in any more public

way than preaching. But when I was weakened with great bleeding and left solitary in my chamber at Sir John Cook's in Derbyshire, without any acquaintance but my servant about me, and was sentenced to death by the physicians, I began to contemplate more seriously on the Everlasting Rest which I apprehended myself to be just on the borders of. And that my thoughts might not too much scatter in my meditation I began to write something on the subject, intending but the quantity of a sermon or two (which is the cause that the beginning is in brevity and style disproportionable to the rest), but being continued long in weakness, where I had no books nor no better employment, I followed it on till it was enlarged to the bulk in which it is published. The first three weeks I spent in it was at Mr. Nowel's house at Kirby-Mallory in Leicestershire ; a quarter of a year more, at the seasons which so great weakness would allow, I bestowed on it at Sir Tho. Rous's house at Rous-Leach, Worcestershire, and I finished it shortly afterwards at Kidderminster. The first and last parts were first done, being all that I intended for my own use ; and the second and third parts came afterwards in beside my first intention.

"This book it pleased GOD so far to bless to the profit of many that it encouraged me to be guilty of all those scripts which after followed. The marginal citations I put in after I came home to my books, but almost all the book itself was written when I had no books but a Bible and a Concordance. And I found that the transcript of the heart hath the greatest force on the hearts of others. For the good that I have heard that multitudes have received by that writing, and the benefit which I have again received from their prayers, I here humbly return my thanks to Him that compelled me to write it."

It was not, of course, the present Hall in which Baxter stayed, for that only dates back to about 1700—though there are large remains of an older Tudor house built into the back—and the building itself is hardly as noteworthy as its garden.

This has every charm that a garden ought to have. It is green and spacious, silent and sweetly scented, cool with running and with springing water, and owes as much to art as to nature. The original formality of its Dutch style is tempered by age. The stiff yew hedges, still kept carefully trimmed, have assumed such massive and splendid proportions as to be almost monumental, and the great cedars and limes and pines that overhang them have long grown beyond control of the shears and exhibit the most varied and fantastic shapes. You may



The Garden, Melbourne Hall.

wander down broad flights of shallow steps, through a long twilight tunnel cut in the heart of the yew hedge, to the symmetrical fish-pond which is surrounded on three sides by high walls of yew, in which are clipped bowers and niches for statutes. A rococo, and rather portly, Perseus leers delightfully at an equally plump and self-satisfied Andromeda. On the one side two Cupids quarrel and leaden tears run down their dimpled cheeks; on the other they embrace with rapture. Indeed, the wealth of garden sculpture and ornaments is renowned, one leaden vase in particular, of noble proportions and adorned with many figures, being an oft-quoted model of its kind. It is approached by a long lawn at right angles to the fish-pond, and the vista of the light feathery foliage of the limes, which here meet overhead, springing from the sombre hedges of the pervading yew, is very beautiful. But there are endless vistas, fountains, statues, intersecting alleys and noble avenues; and even a delightful grotto with rocaille work and a trickling well, whose waters are extolled in heavy Alexandrines inscribed on a marble tablet. In the springtime the moist young greenery of trees and turf, the carpet of pale sweet-smelling flowers, and the chorus of rooks, of wood pigeons and of thrushes make this garden the most desirable place imaginable. Tom Moore, who often came to Melbourne when he was living at Kegworth, describes its beauties in his *Pegasus; or, The Ashby Guide*:—

> "Melbourne, thy sweet and gardens gay
> Shall for a moment claim delay,
> But vain are all descriptive powers
> To paint those bright Elysian bowers,
> Where Nature spreads her thousand dyes,
> With nicest skill to charm our eyes,
> And Flora and Pomona join
> To stamp the lovely spot divine.

Across the road from the gardens lies a broad lake, called the Pool, filling an ancient quarry, so tradition says, where the stone was got for Melbourne Castle.

From Melbourne we turn towards Swarkeston Bridge by way of King's Newton, a romantic single street village containing the picturesque ruins of an ancient hall, the old home of the Hardinges, which was burnt in 1859. Here Charles II. once spent a night, but the name of King's Newton, or Newton Regis, is of much earlier date. At the cross roads at the entrance of the village stands the Pack Horse Inn, whose name tells the story of the unmetalled lane running down the hill near by. This was the pack-horse track, and once the main highway from north to south through the midlands when Swarkeston Bridge was the only bridge over the Trent between Burton and Nottingham. Shardlow Bridge was not built till the coaching days. Then, when the Cavendish Bridge at Shardlow was built, the line of traffic quitted Swarkeston and King's Newton, and ran from Derby to Loughborough by way of Alvaston, Shardlow, Kegworth, and the valley of the Soar. The old track received yet another blow when a better road was cut from Swarkeston to Melbourne, which left King's Newton high and dry upon the left. Nevertheless we will take the ancient way down to the bridge, noting as we descend the fine brick wall which used to enclose King's Newton Hall and its delightful situation on the crest of the slope. A few yards down on the right hand side is a sunken path leading to the Holy Well. Why it was accounted holy I could not discover, but the spring is surmounted by a plain, arched stone structure five feet high, with the Latin inscription,

Fons sacer hic struitur Roberto nominis Hardinge.

and the date 1662. This was the Hardinge who entertained King Charles in the house above. Perhaps Sacred Majesty walked down to it or drank from it, and thus sanctified the spring! Our track, nearly choked in places with brambles, winds through the fields, emerges at length by the side of a farm, and enters the main road at the beginning of the long approach to Swarkeston Bridge. The actual span over the

Swarkeston Bridge.

Trent is no more than 414 feet, but the bridge in its entirety is 1304 yards, or three-quarters of a mile, in length, and consists for the most part of a raised causeway with numerous arches.

In summer these look futile and meaningless as they stand in the dry meadows, but the Trent even now has a trick of overflowing his channel and spreading his floods far and wide, and in the old days, when floods were regarded as a dispensation to be accepted rather than as a nuisance to be abated, the valley must often have been impassable. Tradition says that the bridge was built at the expense of two maiden sisters, whose lovers were drowned while trying to ford the river. They devoted their whole fortune to keeping it in repair. A little chapel stood on one of the piers on the Stanton side, a sure sign of the bridge's antiquity and importance. Such chantry chapels were frequent in early days; there was even a religious order known as "The Brothers of the Bridge." London Bridge, for example, was first built, if Stow may be trusted, by the monks of St. Mary Overie's. At Droitwich the road actually passed through the bridge chapel, leaving the priest on one side and the congregation on the other; on Wakefield Bridge the Gothic chapel still remains—though much restored—that was built on the site of an older one by Edward IV. in memory of his father, the Duke of York, and his adherents who fell at the battle of Wakefield. The Swarkeston chapel was probably a much simpler building, with a priest in attendance to say prayers and to take toll. Bridges then were few and far between, and if they saved people the discomfort and often the peril of a fording, the privilege was worth, in common gratitude, a prayer.

The Swarkeston Bridge chapel suffered the fate which befell most other religious buildings in England at the Reformation. It was looted. The plunderer was Mr. Edward Beamont, of Arkeston, and the Church Goods Commissioners of 1552 reported, "We have a chapell edified and buylded uppon Trent in ye mydest of the greate streme annexed to Swerston bregge, the whiche had certayns stuffe belongyng to it, ii desks to knell

in, a table of wode, and certayne barres of yron and glasse in the wyndos, which Mr. Edward Beamont, of Arkeston, hath taken awaye to his owne use, and we saye that if the chappell dekeye, the brydge wyll not stande." Evidently a mean and paltry theft, for which we hope Mr. Beamont's conscience twinged him. The bridge stood, however, though the chapel fell into ruins, but there was more than one lawsuit respecting liability to pay for its upkeep. The present span over the river dates only from 1796—97. The earlier one had been carried away in 1795 by the timber which came floating down the river from a timber yard during a heavy flood.

Naturally, Swarkeston Bridge witnessed some fighting in the Civil War, for both sides were anxious to command this passage over Trent. In a skirmish here on Jan. 5th, 1643, Sir John Gell, of Hopton, the most active of the Parliamentary leaders in the Midlands, routed the Royalists and kept a firm hold of the bridge throughout the war. A century later, in 1745, Swarkeston Bridge was held for two nights by the advance guard of Prince Charlie's Highland army, so that the main body might cross the Trent without molestation. But the opportunity never came, for the order was given to retreat from Derby by the way they had come.

Nor has Swarkeston Bridge lacked its tribute of song. Thomas Bancroft, the poet, was born in early Stuart days at the little village hard by, and in his collection of *Epigrams*, published in 1639, he wrote :—

> "Swarston, when I behold that pleasant sight
> Whose river runs a progress with delight,
> Joyed with the beauties of fresh flowery plaines
> And bounteous fields that crown the Plow-man's pains.
> I sigh (that see my native home estranged)
> For Heaven, whose Lord and tenure's never changed."

Bancroft's elder brother had sold the family property and emigrated to America. In those days Sir John Harpur, of Swarkeston,—whose monument and that of his father, a

Justice of the Common Pleas, are still to be seen in the church—was one of the principal gentry in South Derbyshire, and at his death Bancroft wrote an epitaph with a curious

The Balcony Field, Swarkeston.

double pun in it, and an interesting reference to the bridge :—

> " As did cold Hebrus with deep grones
> The Thracian Harper once lament,
> So art thou with incessant mones
> Bewayled by thy doleful Trent,

While the astonisht Bridge doth show,
(Like an Arch-mourner) heaviest woe."

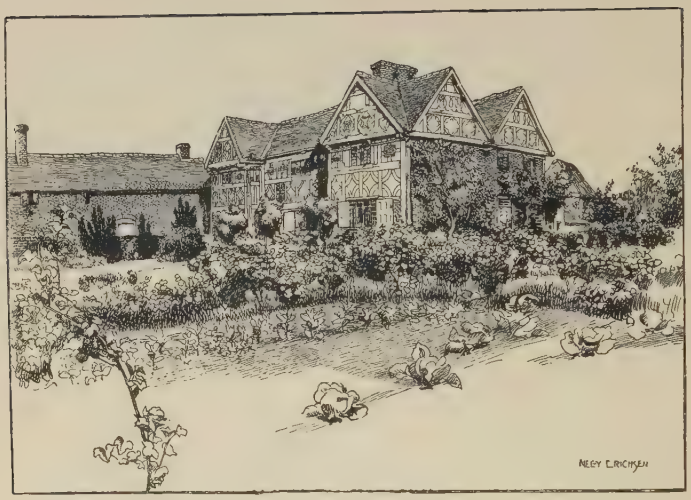
Bancroft used to fish in the Trent by Swarkeston Bridge :—

"Sweet river, on whose flowery margin laid,
I with the slippery fish have often played
At fast and loose."

And, two centuries later, it was a favourite fishing haunt of a very different and much more famous man. Herbert Spencer, in his recently issued *Autobiography*, tells how one morning, when he was a young man living with his parents at Derby, he found he could not sleep, and so, he says, "I got up, dressed, sallied out, walked to Swarkeston, five miles off, and began fishing by moonlight." A place without associations is lacking, whatever its beauty, in completeness. Without human interest it is shorn of half its attractiveness. Swarkeston Bridge is only a very long bridge to the person who crosses it unthinkingly. Those who know its past can people it with strange figures, and will be glad to add to the motley throng the youthful figure of Herbert Spencer fishing there in the moonlight. Alas that a practical but prosaic County Council should have been guilty of filling in some of the arches with vile blue bricks!

Just beyond the little church on the river bank are the extensive ruins of the old mansion of the Harpurs, which was fortified for the king by Colonel Hastings in 1643—doubtless one of the Donington Park Hastings—though he had to withdraw after the skirmish by the bridge. A large and picturesque farmhouse has been built out of the stone and bricks, but enough remains to show what an important place it must have been. Near by stands another ruin of later date at one side of an enclosure—known locally as the Balcony Field—about a hundred yards long by sixty wide. It is a shallow building, one room only in depth, with three storeys in each

tower and a single long room in the middle above an open pillared arcade. The back is a blank wall unbroken by any window. It seems to have been an elaborate Stuart summer house, or banqueting house, with garden and bowling green attached.



Wakelyn Hilton.

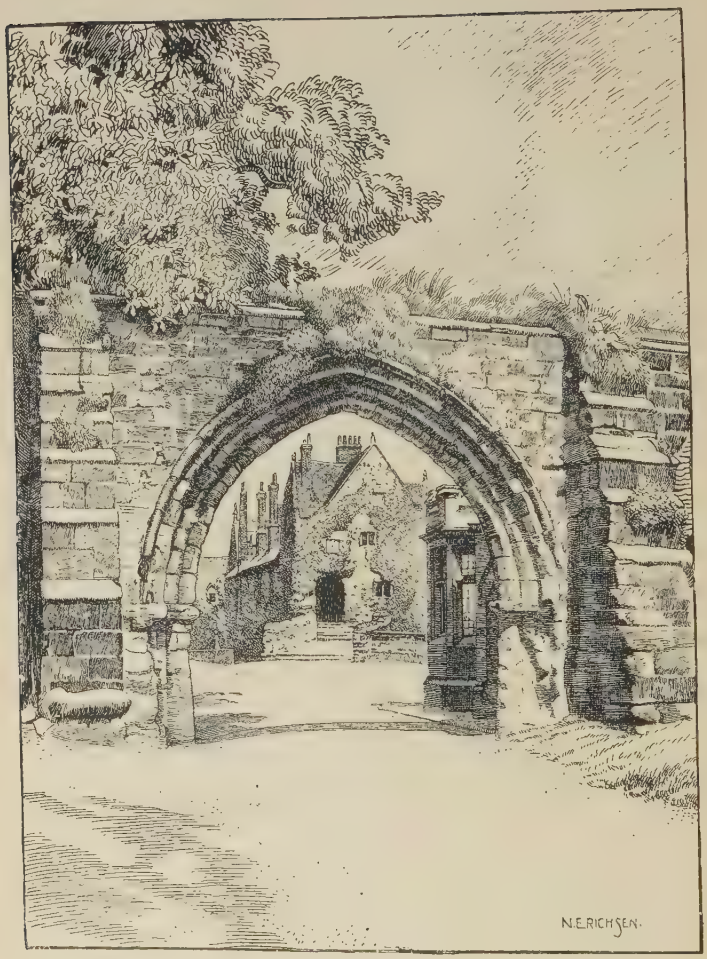
CHAPTER III

REPTON AND TUTBURY

The broad road before us leads on to Derby, through the little village of Chellaston, famous for its alabaster. We will not, however, go on to Derby now, nor will we choose the other main road through Barrow and Twyford to the west. Let us rather turn back over the bridge and take the narrow by-road up the right bank of the Trent, which here runs in a fairly deep channel, though at the bends tell-tale flood-posts more than hint its wayward character. In a couple of miles Ingleby is reached, a delightful little village, innocent alike of church and inn, and set among noble trees. Beyond the last farm where the road twists to the left at right angles and passes through a gate, take the footpath through the field up to the crest of the rising ground. If your desire be to see Anchor Church, which is said to have been a hermit's abode on the river cliff— it has been much altered in modern times —bear to

the right; but the place is hardly worth the trouble of finding. Keep to the left, therefore, where the footpath forks and slants across to the road by a belt of wood, and there take another continuing path on the left, which leads down to the elaborate stables at the back of Foremark Hall, an Adams mansion, the lower half of stone, the upper of brick, with a fine horse-shoe staircase of approach. This seat of the Burdetts, built in 1762, was the favourite residence of that fox-hunting Radical squire, Sir Francis Burdett, the hero of the famous Westminster election of 1807, and the hope of the advanced Reformers and of all the discontented throughout the land. He it was who barricaded his London house against the Speaker's warrant, and was fined £2,000 and endured three months' imprisonment for a vigorous attack on the Government over the Peterloo riots in 1817. He lived to see Reform carried, and lived also to sit on the Tory side of the House of Commons. "I am sick of the cant of patriotism," he said on one well-known occasion in the House, and Lord John Russell, with a bitter taunt, retorted that if there was one thing more nauseous than the cant of patriotism it was the recant of patriotism. The undulating and finely timbered park of Foremark is delightful, and contains the little church consecrated by Bishop Hacket in 1662, which serves the people both of Ingleby and Milton. Hacket was the Royalist Bishop of Lichfield, who rebuilt the cathedral shattered in the Civil War and excommunicated his own dean. We make our way across the fields to the little village of Milton, and Repton is but a mile and a half further on.

Repton is charmingly situated on the slope of the rising ground above the Trent, from which it is about a mile distant. Its claims to have been a Roman station are of the slenderest, but in post-Roman days, when England was split up into its various Saxon kingdoms, Repton was one of the principal towns of the great Angle kingdom of Mercia. There was an important Saxon abbey here, a portion of which may be seen



Priory Gate, Repton.

in the crypt beneath the chancel, and here kings and princes have been buried. Then came the plundering Danes, who

destroyed the town and preferred Derby as a more convenient centre; but in later days, when Mercia was reconquered by the Saxons, another church arose, and in Norman times the Austin Canons removed hither from their Priory at Calke. The Prior's House is now the residence of the Headmaster of Repton School, and the picturesque gateway that led into the precincts still serves as entrance to the school grounds. The Church of St. Wystan has an exquisite spire, but the interior of the building is exceedingly disappointing, save for the tiny Saxon crypt with four spiral columns and eight fluted responds by the walls. Here in this dim chamber lies a nameless and battered knight in armour, evidently brought down from above into this weird, uncomfortable-looking resting-place to be out of the way of living worshippers.

Nowadays the fame of Repton rests upon its school, the only school of any celebrity in the entire county. It was founded as a village grammar-school by Sir John Port in 1557, whose trustees bought the Priory site from the Thackers, furious Protestants, who, fearing lest Queen Mary should restore the Prior and his monks, had "destroyed the nest that the birds might not build there again." Sir John Port did for Repton what John Lyon did for Harrow, and Lawrence Sheriffe did for Rugby. His foundation passed through all the vicissitudes common to the country grammar-school. Thus, while in the third quarter of the eighteenth century it had become a boarding-school in something of the modern sense of the term and had more than two hundred scholars, in 1854 there were no more than fifty. Then the school found its reconstructor in the person of Dr. Pears, and the years of his headmastership saw Repton take its place amid the best dozen higher public schools of England. Of its scholarship there is not so much said, but it has proved a nursery of athletes, and the style of its cricket is unimpeachable.

It is a mile from Repton Church down to the bridge over the Trent—one of the very last main road bridges in England

to be freed from tolls, and the toll board is erected as a sort of trophy in the village of Willington just beyond, where we cross the Midland Railway from Derby to Birmingham. I wished to see the confluence of the Dove and the Trent, as my route followed for so many miles the course of the smaller stream, and at the Willington cross-roads turned leftwards to the towpath of the Trent and Mersey Canal. This was one of the most important waterways designed by that Derbyshire genius, James Brindley, of whom we shall have something to say when we reach his birthplace near Tideswell. The victorious railway lies on its left hand, just as busy as the canal is quiet, though the latter is not yet wholly deserted by the slow-moving barges. Two miles on, at a bridge with a house by its side, leave the canal if you would see the actual meeting of the waters, and go down the farm road to its termination across the railway, and out into the fields on the right hand, having first obtained permission for the trespass. Here the Dove comes hasting along, flowing rapidly with many a gurgling eddy between low banks, and fringed on one side with willows and alders. The Dove itself at this point has little claim to picturesqueness, and whatever beauty the landscape possesses is supplied by the right bank of the Trent. There, across the wide stream, lies Newton Solney, a pretty village with graceful church spire and creeper-covered hall, while a mile or more up the reach the bank becomes wooded and rises a hundred and fifty feet to the battlements of Baldon Castle.

We must needs retrace our way to the canal and cross the bridge into the main road from Derby to Burton. This is the ancient Ryknield Street, the Roman road from Birmingham to Chesterfield through Burton and Derby. It was along this highway that Dr. Johnson, then a lean, lank and scrofulous young man of twenty-six, and his "darling Tetty," a robust widow of forty-nine, rode into Derby to be married. The Doctor shall tell anew the story of what happened, as he once told it to Boswell :—

"Sir, she had read the old romances and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog. So, Sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me; and, when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice: and I resolved to begin as I meant to end. I, therefore, pushed on briskly, till I was fairly out of her sight, The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it; and I contrived that she should soon come up with me. When she did, I observed she was in tears."

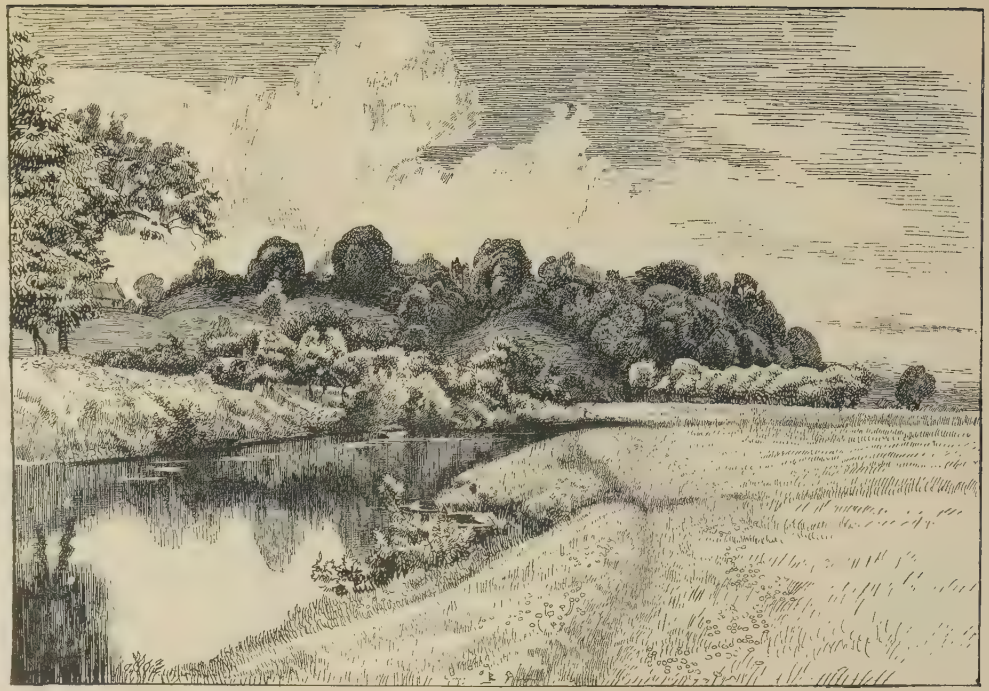
And thus the battle was won, ere the nuptial knot was tied, on the high road to Derby.

It is worth while turning leftwards for half a mile to the fine old Monks Bridge over the Dove, whose name is a reminder that there was once a powerful abbey at Burton-on-Trent. Just below this bridge the canal is carried across the river on stout low arches—another of Brindley's triumphs, which in its day was one of the wonders of the district. From the bridge-side let us take the footpath which soon slants across to Eggington Church, set among the trees at the corner of a pretty park. In the village turn rightwards up the main street, then to the left at the first branch road, and, where this road begins to bend round to the left, take a footpath on the right which leads through rich meadows into the high road near Eggington station. Here we are on the fringe of the common where in 1644 the Dutchman Major Mollanus—a soldier of fortune who sold his sword to the Parliament—scattered a squadron of Royalist horse. At Eggington we cross the North Staffordshire railway, and, as twilight falls, the roads are busy with the clattering milk-carts for the local butter factories and the supply of the distant towns. The milk trade is the staple agricultural industry in this corner of Derbyshire. At Hilton—a not very attractive village save for a fine half-timbered house in the main street—we join the main road from Derby to Uttoxeter, but soon quit it again for a footpath which leads through delightful meadows down towards the pretty church of Marston-on-Dove, and then, turning

westwards, conducts us in another mile to the outskirts of Tutbury.

Tutbury lies on the Staffordshire bank of the Dove—which throughout its entire length forms the boundary between Staffordshire and Derbyshire—but no Derbyshire tourist, afoot or awheel, can resist the subtle attraction of this castle-crowned hill which rises from the plain. John Bright used to say that old abbeys only suggested to him superstition and old castles violence—a characteristic utterance from one who had little sense of historical association and thought no noble prospect complete without the chimneys of cotton-mills in the foreground, background, and middle distance. Superstition there may have been in old abbeys—is it extinct in modern Puritanism? Violence there certainly was in old castles, but of scarcely more cruel type than is found in modern Industrialism. However, we have not come hither to argue, but to enjoy what Erdeswicke, in his *Survey of Staffordshire*, three centuries ago called "the large, and brave prospect both to it, in it and from it." Tutbury Castle was built by one of the Conqueror's ablest henchmen, Henry de Ferrers, Earl of Derby. Twice it was forfeited to the Crown for its owner's share in unsuccessful rebellion, and then, in the middle of the fourteenth century, it passed into the hands of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. He rebuilt it in 1350 on a lavish and extended scale, and for some years Tutbury was perhaps the gayest place in all England, and its halls and courtyards resounded with constant revelry. As part of the Duchy of Lancaster it reverted to the Crown, and in Tudor days was let on lease to the Talbots, the Earls of Shrewsbury, by whom it was kept in no more than tolerable repair.

Such a place in the reign of Queen Elizabeth must have been very inconvenient to live in, for it had been built as a fortress, and in two centuries the standards of comfort and taste had greatly changed. At the close of the year 1568, however, there was great commotion at Tutbury Castle. News had



Tutbury Castle from the Banks of the Dove.

come that it was to be set in order for the reception of Mary Queen of Scots. The sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, who had just married Bess of Hardwick, had been appointed Mary's guardian or keeper by Queen Elizabeth, and he was to take care of his charge at Tutbury, because of its remoteness from Scotland on the one hand and from the sea-coast on the other. Queen Mary was to be isolated: what better place could be chosen than this little town with its strong castle on the banks of the Dove? In a later chapter we shall deal more fully with Shrewsbury and his Countess and with their unhappy captive, who had fled into England from her rebel Scottish lords. Those who are curious in these matters may find among the State Papers full lists of the "wardrobe stuff" and the silver plate which were sent down from the stores in the Tower of London for the Queen's use in Tutbury Castle. They included nineteen pieces of tapestry work showing the History of the Passion, the History of Ladies, and the History of Hercules; four "Turquey" carpets and beds, chairs and stools, with sheets and pillows and pillow-beers of best Holland and others of coarser stuff, besides silver basins and ewers and spoons, and four gilt "chandellours." The old place needed all these and more also, and we may be sure that the niggardly Elizabeth took care not to send too much.

Queen Mary came riding down from Bolton Castle in Yorkshire, through Ripon, Wetherby, Rotherham, Chesterfield, and Wingfield, and reached Tutbury on February 4th, 1569. It was a large cavalcade, for Mary brought with her sixty attendants, her lords and ladies in waiting, her physicians and chaplains, her grooms and cooks. Tutbury could not accommodate them all, and some had to find quarters at Burton, a few miles away; while Mary herself bitterly complained of the draughts and the cold in the castle. It was a shivery place and gave her headaches and "grief of the splene." In one of her letters, written some years later at the time of her second stay in the castle, she thus describes her apartments:

John of Gaunt's Gateway, Tutbury Castle.

"I am in a walled enclosure, on the top of a hill, exposed to all winds and inclemencies of heaven. Within the said enclosure, resembling that of the Wood of Vincennes, there is a very old hunting lodge, built of timber

and plaster, cracked in all parts, the plaster adhering nowhere to the woodwork and broken in numberless places. The said lodge is distant three fathoms or thereabouts from the wall, and situated so low that the rampart of earth which is behind the wall is on a level with the highest point of the building, so that the sun can never shine upon it on that side, nor any fresh air come to it, for which reason it is so damp that you cannot put any piece of furniture in that part without its being in four days completely covered with mould. I leave you to think how this must act upon the human body; and, in short, the greater part of it is rather a dungeon for base and abject criminals than a habitation fit for a person of my quality, or even of a much lower.

"The only apartments that I have for my own person consist of two little miserable rooms, so excessively cold, especially at nights, that but for the ramparts and entrenchments of curtains and tapestry that I have made it would not be possible for me to stay in them in the day time, and out of those who have sate up with me at night during my illnesses scarcely one has escaped without fluxion or cold or some other disorder."

As for the garden, she continues, it is no better than a potato ground fenced in with dry wood—"a place fitter to keep pigs in than to bear the name of a garden: there is not a sheep-pen among the fields but makes a better appearance."

But what prisoner was ever content with his prison? Mary, like Napoleon at Longwood, was determined to be satisfied with nothing—an easy *rôle*—but, fortunately, the other side of the case has also been preserved. In consequence of the Queen's complaints, Walsingham appointed John Somers to report to him on the state of Tutbury Castle. Here are his words:—

"As to the lodgings appointed for this Queen, being the chiefest of the house, standing orderly together, flanking all alongside a fair large green court, the prospect to the east very fair, and some to the west (but not far), as they are now ordered, by transposing of some partitions, sealing one chamber and by making of one chimney. There is a fair dining chamber about 36 feet long, joining to that a fair cabinet private with a chimney. Next to that her bedchamber, about 27 feet long, for two beds and a pallet as she used to have, and within it a proper closet private and other good rooms for the rest of her gentlewomen which lie not in her chamber, four or five."

The grammar of this is hopelessly confused but the sense is clear, and Somers concludes by saying: "Thus, in my opinion, she shall be very well lodged and accommodated in all things. . . . The country is champaign, very pleasant, fruitful and commodious for all needful provisions at hand. I call it England, for methinks here we be out of it in a wilderness. God bring us first thither if we must go, and then shortly further southward." No doubt, Tutbury was horribly draughty, and the sanitary arrangements, of which Mary also complained, were most obnoxious, but her quarters were hardly so bad as she depicted.

Mary was reasonable enough at first. She consented to reduce her retinue by one-half—a point about which Shrewsbury was very anxious, considering that Elizabeth only allowed him the entirely inadequate sum of £45 a week for expenses. She made herself very agreeable to Shrewsbury and his Countess. "She daily resorts to my wife's chamber," the Earl reported, "where with Lady Leviston and Mrs. Seton she sits working with her needle, wherein she much delights, and devising works. Her talk is altogether of indifferent trifling matters, and without any sign of secret dealing or practice, I assure you." So wrote the Earl, whose report was scanned very jealously by Elizabeth's steely eyes. She sent him a warning against being influenced by the seductive manners of Queen Mary and objected warmly to her growing too intimate with the Countess. The Earl was greatly upset. What was he to do? he asked. How could he prevent Queen Mary and the Countess from meeting? "True," he said, "I cannot avoid such resort unless I kept fast the doors, so that she should think herself a strait prisoner, yet am ready and willing so to do if her Majesty (Queen Elizabeth) command."

The year 1569 was an exciting one for all concerned. Elizabeth, as yet, had no thought of violence; she was prepared to let Mary go on terms, for there was still a strong

party on her side in Scotland. Mary herself, while her talk was of indifferent trifles, was busy plotting escape and luring on to hope for her hand in marriage the unfortunate fourth Duke of Norfolk, despite Elizabeth's friendly warning to him to "take care on what pillow he laid his head." But her health was not good, and in April, when she was removed to Wingfield, she grew worse. Shrewsbury, too, had a violent attack of the "goute" and went off to "the baynes at Buckestones" without Queen Elizabeth's leave, leaving Sir John Zouche to act as his substitute. Elizabeth was furious, ordered his return at once, and appointed the puritanical Earl of Huntingdon—from Donington Park—to act as co-gaoler and co-guardian. In September they were all back at Tutbury, where Shrewsbury was much annoyed at being obliged to tolerate Huntingdon's presence. Next month came the insurrection of the Catholic Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, who planned a dash down from Tadcaster to Tutbury to carry off the Queen. Shrewsbury got wind of the plot, and he and Huntingdon entered Queen Mary's chamber, pistolets in hand, and searched among her papers. In November they spirited her away to Coventry, until the danger in the North had blown over, and it was said that had any attempt at rescue been made Shrewsbury had orders to take the Queen's life. They were at Tutbury again by Christmas. Shrewsbury's vigilance had disarmed Elizabeth's suspicions of his loyalty, and the Earl of Huntingdon's commission came to an end. Queen Mary was plotting as usual—who can blame her for it?—and in February of 1570 Shrewsbury had the lock of her outer chamber door taken off so that his people might see what her servants were doing at any hour of the night. He also gave the Queen a sound rebuke for trying to escape. Mary was offended but helpless, and in May she was removed to Chatsworth. Nor did she again see Tutbury Castle until the end of 1584, just after Shrewsbury had been released from a charge which had grown intolerably irksome to him. Then, after

spending a few more unhappy months there, she began her fateful journey south from castle to castle, until the last sad

The Moat, Tutbury Castle.

scene of her troublous life was enacted in the courtyard at Fotheringay.

It is not very easy to follow Queen's Mary's description of the castle from the present state of the ruins. Her apartments, which are said to have been in the north-eastern corner of the bailey, are now wholly demolished. The best-preserved fronts are the northern and the eastern, where, in the early Stuart time, considerable rebuilding and strengthening of the older fabric took place. The outer part of the eastern gateway is of this period, and the huge buttresses of what is known as John of Gaunt's Gateway on the northern side. The dry moat remains around the circuit of the walls, and the tall tower on the northern side may still be climbed and gives a magnificent prospect up the valley of the Dove. On the south side is a mound upon which about a hundred years ago an inconceivably stupid ruin was built out of the stones lying round about. This bears the foolish name of Julius's Tower. The bailey is empty of buildings and makes a smooth expanse of green turf which, when I visited it, was occupied by noisy merry-go-rounds and all the other hideous amusements of a country "Feast." Tutbury Castle might be spared these vulgarities and their attendant rowdiness. The castle is now a farm—a fate which has also overtaken Wingfield Manor—and the farmhouse has been built on the eastern side by the entrance gateway.

Below the castle is the church with a fine Norman nave and richly adorned western doorway, but Tutbury itself is rather disappointing, save for the half-timbered front of the little hostelry, the Dog and Partridge, in the main street. We descend to the bridge over the Dove, just below which in the river bed was found the Tutbury treasure, the contents of a military chest upset while the Earl of Leicester's army, after being driven out of the castle, was hurriedly crossing the ford, in Edward II.'s reign. Passing over the level crossing of the railway we take the road—the lower one is the prettier of the two -to Sudbury, through champaign country which calls for no remark.

Sudbury Hall.

CHAPTER IV

SUDBURY, DOVERIDGE, NORBURY AND ELLASTON

Sudbury is a charming village—prettiness itself—and the home of the Vernons, whose graceful Elizabethan mansion of red brick stands in a delightful park. The road runs close to the house, and is bordered by its level lawns, but the beautiful gardens and the lake are hidden from sight. It was a lady who built the Hall, Mary, daughter of Sir Edward Littleton and wife of two Vernons, the first being Walter Vernon of Houndshill and the second John Vernon of Sudbury. She was contemporary with Bess of Hardwick, and, maybe, was influenced by the example of that imperious lady to occupy her long years of widowhood in building a house worthy of the Vernons. She died in 1622; her son, Sir Edward Vernon, laid out the grounds, and the head of the family was ennobled in 1762. Queen Adelaide, the kindly consort of the sailor

King, William IV., lived here for three years, during her widowhood, from 1840 to 1843.

In the pretty church by the side of the Hall are monuments to many of the Vernons, who have played their part—creditable rather than distinguished—in the history of England for the last three hundred years. We will speak only of the George Vernon who was a great patron of the chase, a typical horse-loving, fox-hunting, English county gentleman. His fame is enshrined in a ballad, whose lilt more than atones for its lack of the literary graces. Hounds met at Shirley Park, eight miles to the north-east, where they found a fox which led them across country to the Dove, swam the stream and ran to the Weever Hills, the kill taking place in Wootton Old Park. The ballad begins :—

> "One morning last winter to Shirley Park came
> A brave noble sportsman, George Vernon by name,
> Resolved over hedges and ditches to fly,
> Came a hunting the fox—bold Reynard must die."

Then, after sundry intervening verses, it continues :—

> "The sportsmen they rid at a desperate rate,
> As if they had run for a thousand pound plate,
> No hedges could turn them, no wall could them set,
> For the choicest of sportsmen in England were met.
>
> "The hounds they did rally and briskly pursue,
> Do you hear little Careless, she runs him in view,
> Fifty miles in four hours, which is a great ride,
> But in Wootton Old Park bold Reynard he died.
>
> "Come, gentlemen sportsmen, wherever you be,
> All you that love hunting come near unto me ;
> The chase is now ended, you've heard Reynard's fall,
> So here's a health to Squire Vernon of Sudbury Hall."

After all, a ballad like that, sung with a will in chorus, is a better memorial than any mouldering monument.

Just beyond Sudbury Hall the highway divides, the direct road to Ashbourne branching off to the right by the side of

Sudbury Park through Great Cubley. The name of great in connection with Cubley has become so palpable a misnomer by the lapse of time that it is being tacitly dropped. Cubley, which is worth a visit from the enthusiastic Johnsonian as being the birthplace of Samuel Johnson's father, is a dwindling village which once had a market and a fair. A glance at its church reveals its antiquity, and the Montgomerys of four hundred years ago who lie within it—most of their estates passed to the Vernons by marriage—dwelt in a mansion near by, of which no trace remains save the depression of the moat. But we keep to the left along the undulating road to Doveridge, another charming village with a big mansion and an exquisite church, containing many monuments of the Cavendishes—the Waterpark branch of that house—who used to live until recently in the adjoining Hall. The best monument, however, is the one to the memory of William Davenport, of Hanbury, in the full dress of a cavalier with rosetted high boots. He, his wife, and three little girls are kneeling in prayer, while the baby—presumably a boy—is almost falling out of his cradle in order to show his little face. Nor could there be a more typical gem of eighteenth century diction than the epitaph of the Rev. John Fitzherbert (*ob.* 1785 *æt.* 68), of whom it is said, "He was vicar of this church for thirty-nine years, in which he delivered the momentous doctrines of Christianity with a peculiar propriety and an affecting energy." In the churchyard is a glorious old yew tree, whose low wide-spreading arms are propped and pillared by a score of supports. The trunk is sadly decayed and a mere shell, yet the tree covers half this side of the churchyard with its green shade. In our exploration of Derbyshire we shall not find a prettier God's acre than this at Doveridge, for the entire setting is perfect and the quiet of the place is profound.

The steep lane to the left of the church leads down to a suspension footbridge over the Dove, giving access to a raised

causeway that slants across the wide open meadow on the right bank of the river. This affords a good view of Doveridge Hall perched on the slope we have just quitted—a rather ponderous brick mansion on a base of stone. The causeway brings us out into the main road by the six-arched bridge which here spans the Dove. Uttoxeter's graceful spire—a mile away—may beckon the traveller to its market-place, where Johnson once stood bareheaded, doing penance for the boyish

Doveridge Church and Yew trees.

pride of half a century before which had made him ashamed to stand and sell books at his father's side. Our path, however, lies across the bridge, on which a curious scene was enacted more than a hundred years ago. A little boy was crossing it on his way to school when a man seized him by the collar and held him over the river, threatening to drop him into the water unless he would curse the Methodists. "Never," said the child, "you may kill me if you choose, but I never will." The

boy was Michael Thomas Sadler, who afterwards became the leading advocate of the Ten Hours' Bill for factory children, and, with Richard Oastler, prepared the way for the triumphs of the good Earl of Shaftesbury. Sadler's father lived at the Old Hall, Doveridge, and was a liberal-minded Churchman who favoured the Methodists. It is hard to realise the stupid fanaticism which would terrorise a child in order to protest against the religious views of the child's father. The boy, who thus early showed his grit, began to preach while in his teens —often to the accompaniment of a shower of stones. He went to Leeds, where he started business in 1800 at the age of twenty, entered Parliament for Newark in 1829, and died in 1835.

Twenty yards from the bridge a stile on the left gives access to the meadows, through which a path runs diagonally and ascends a little bluff at the further side. From here we obtain a delightful view up and down the broad valley of the Dove. We look across to the town of Uttoxeter, which hides nothing from our eyes, and beyond and above it to the open fields behind—the fields of a ridge which steadily rises as it spreads away to the right and clothes itself in woods. A few tall chimneys in and near Uttoxeter are but slight blemishes, and the woods of Doveridge blend in the distance with those of Needwood. In the foreground are broad meadows through which the Dove performs some of her finest zigzag feats, glancing like silver where the sun strikes her surface at the bends. In the distance, the Weever Hills of the Staffordshire border begin to show themselves. Our path runs out through fields into a lane, which drops to a farmhouse, passes to its left, and continues as a cart track on the level of the river, keeping close beneath the long overhanging line of the Eaton Woods. Opposite a farm the main track turns down at right angles to the left and crosses the Dove at a ford just below its confluence with the Churnet. We keep straight forward, and, though the path grows faint, the direction is clear. Avoid crossing to

a footbridge and go on till the path slants to the riverside at a looping bend. A handbridge takes us across a tiny tributary in the far corner where the woods descend to the stream, and then a succession of fields bring us out into a main road again by the side of the bridge at Rocester, an ugly village with a Roman name, and an ugly cotton mill. Denston is only two miles away up the road over the bridge, and two miles beyond that again is Alton, with Alton Towers, the famous seat of the Earls of Shrewsbury and Talbot, on the further bank of the Churnet. But these belong to Staffordshire.

From Rocester Bridge a footpath led me through a maze of fields out into a road near the village of Roston. There had been a well-dressing, or well-flowering, here the day before, a charming Derbyshire custom which has been revived in many villages of recent years, when the principal wells are dressed with flowers and a simple religious service is held at their side. Here at Roston the school children had walked in procession from Norbury Church, a mile away, with the clergy at their head. Hymns were sung on the way, and again on reaching the well, where the Benediction was pronounced. The Roston well—it bears the name of Friday Well—stands in a farm-yard at the back of a little Primitive Methodist Chapel, and I found the entrance decked with branches and boughs of trees, with a rustic arch adorned with cheap flags, large festoons of laburnum and lilac, and a scroll bearing the text, "O ye wells, Bless ye the LORD, Praise Him and magnify Him for ever." Over the well itself an elaborate structure had been raised, which had evidently kept the good women of Roston very busy for the previous day or two. A large wooden frame had been made, rounded at the top and divided into separate partitions. In the centre was a representation of Battle Abbey, with the outline of the building picked out in haricot beans. A Union Jack waved above it -the red being supplied by geranium petals, the blue by cornflowers, and the

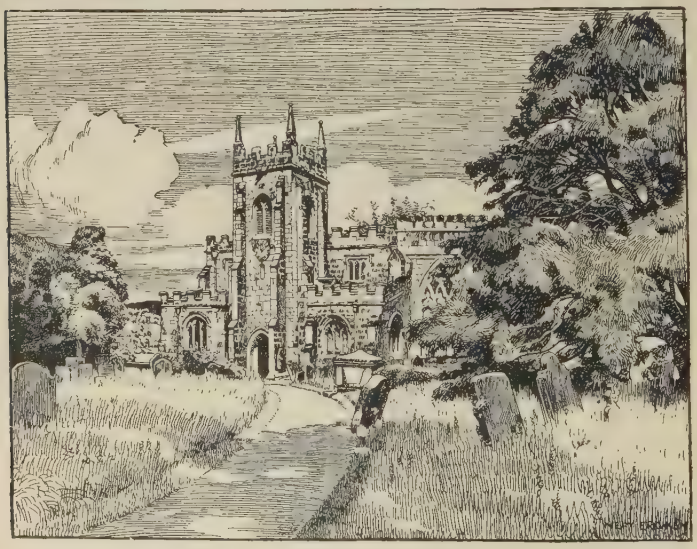
white by rice. The background was of moss and other green stuff. Devices were formed out of Indian corn, linseed and small fir cones; daisies in intersecting rings and as borders were a feature of the decoration, and bright colours were obtained from different flower petals. "Peace unto All" was the legend at the top of the frame, and at the foot "God save the King," while a dove of haricot beans spread benign and sheltering wings over all. The whole was a most creditable display of ingenuity and good taste. The frames are coated over with wet clay into which salt has been kneaded in order to keep it moist and adhesive, and the flowers and other ornaments are then stuck on one by one.

From Roston it is but a mile down to Norbury, whose church on the steep bank above the Dove is the most charming building of its kind in Derbyshire.

> "Sweet Norbury, decked with rural smiles,
> Gleams faintly through these sylvan aisles;
> 'Mid Gothic grandeur soars serene
> O'er bold varieties of scene."

So sang John Gisborne in his *Vales of Weever*, but the third line is strange, for Norbury Church has no spire and its low tower can by no stretch of imagination be said to "soar serene." The building is dedicated to an unknown saint, Barloke by name, and the conjecture that he was some British saint of an early century certainly receives confirmation from the recent discovery of two elaborately decorated pre-Norman cross shafts which were found built into one of the buttresses of the north wall. The ground plan of Norbury Church is most unusual, for the chancel, 46ft. 6in. in length, is only three feet less than the nave. There is a north but no south aisle, the tower, standing between two chapels, taking its place. It is the chancel, however, which is the glory of Norbury Church, and its nine great windows flood it with a stream of light. The rich glass—in soft browns and greens, unique of their kind—dates back to Henry Kniveton's day, the rector

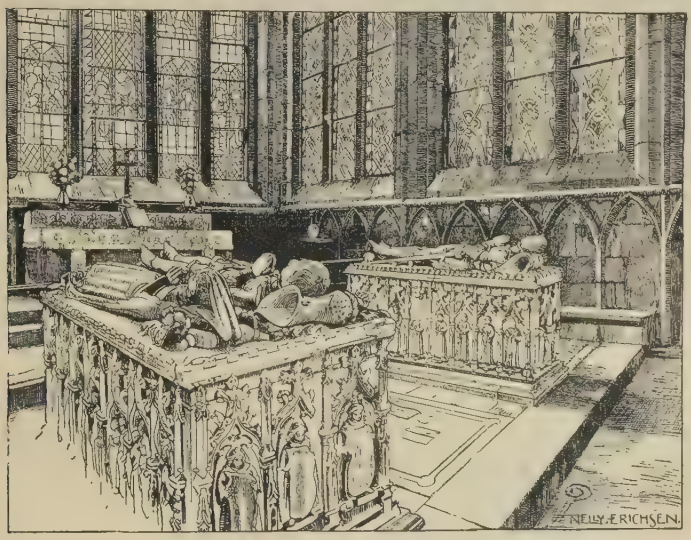
who built the chancel in the middle of the fourteenth century; but the glass of the fine east window was taken from windows in the north aisle, to replace what had been sold by a Vandal incumbent of a century ago. On the chancel floor stand a number of finely sculptured table-tombs of the Fitzherberts, who for long centuries were the lords of Norbury. The two finest are those of Nicholas, who died in 1473, and his son Ralph, each bearing a recumbent effigy in admirable preservation.



Norbury Church.

The brass of Sir Anthony Fitzherbert, the 13th Lord of Norbury, lies in the centre of the chancel floor. This Sir Anthony was the sixth son of Ralph Fitzherbert, and was a judge of great renown in the early days of the sixteenth century, and author of *La Graunde Abridgement* and *L'Office et l'Auctorité de Justices de Paix*—law books which have now passed into oblivion, but which were quoted as standard authorities for many generations. He died in

1538; the house he lived in still survives, a few yards to the west of the church. This old residence of the Fitzherberts — its comparatively recent front does but conceal its real antiquity —contains a series of magnificently panelled rooms, one of which is known by tradition as "Sir Anthony's study." The Fitzherberts dwelt here down to 1649—the earliest Fitzherbert monument in the church is of Sir Henry, the fifth lord, who died in 1367—and in that year Sir John Fitzherbert died with-



The Chancel and Fitzherbert Tombs, Norbury Church.

out issue and the estates passed to the Fitzherberts of Swinnerton in Staffordshire. The Hall then became a farmhouse and so remained until the estate changed hands and the modern mansion, higher up the hill on the site of the old vicarage, was built by the new possessor. The Norbury Fitzherberts remained true to the Catholic faith at the Reformation and suffered cruel persecution for their constancy. Sir Thomas Fitzherbert, the eldest son of the judge, was one of the most

prominent victims of the Elizabethan persecution, which was just as merciless as the Marian. He spent thirty years of his life in prison at Derby and Lambeth, in the Fleet and in the Tower, as a contumacious recusant, but there is evidence to show that the malignant severity shown to him was partly due to private spite on the part of some of his Protestant neighbours. The Fitzherberts, like the Eyres of North Derbyshire with whom they intermarried, were a large family with many collateral branches, and took different sides in religion and politics. Thus, while the Norbury Fitzherberts waned, the Protestant Fitzherberts of Tissington waxed, and it is the latter branch of the family which has been in the ascendant during the last two centuries.

Here at Norbury we are in George Eliot's country. Just across the river in Staffordshire is the little village of Ellaston, and Ellaston is the Hayslope which the novelist describes so vividly in the second chapter of *Adam Bede*. Readers will remember how the landlord of the Donnithorne Arms explains to a traveller who has ridden up that there is to be "a Methodis preaching" that evening on the green, and how the traveller stays to listen to Dinah Morris's address. No one ever drew a landscape in prose more graphically than George Eliot, and so, though the passage is long, we must quote it whole :—

"The green lay at the extremity of the village, and from it the road branched off in two directions, one leading farther up the hill by the church and the other winding gently down towards the valley. On the side of the green that led towards the church the broken line of thatched cottages was continued nearly to the churchyard gate ; but on the opposite north-western side there was nothing to obstruct the view of gently-swelling meadow and wooded valley, and dark masses of distant hill. That rich undulating district of Loamshire to which Hayslope belonged lies close to a grim outskirt of Stonyshire, overlooked by its barren hills as a pretty blooming sister may sometimes be seen linked in the arm of a rugged, tall, swarthy brother ; and in two or three hours' ride the traveller might exchange a bleak treeless region, intersected by lines of cold grey stone, for one where his road wound under the shelter of woods, or up swelling hills, muffled with hedgerows and long meadow grass and thick corn, and

where at every turn he came upon some fine old country-seat nestled in the valley or crowning the slopes, some homestead with its long length of barn and its cluster of golden ricks, some grey steeple looking out from a pretty confusion of trees and thatch and dark red tile. It was just such a picture as this last that Hayslope Church had made to the traveller as he began to mount the gentle slope leading to its pleasant uplands, and now from this station near the green he had before him in one view nearly all the other typical features of this pleasant land. High up against the horizon were the huge conical masses of hill, like giant mounds intended to fortify this region of corn and grass against the keen and hungry winds of the north, not distant enough to be clothed in purple mystery, but with sombre greenish sides visibly speckled with sheep, whose motion was only revealed by memory not detected by sight, wooed from day to day by the changing hours, but responding with no change in themselves—left for ever grim and sullen after the flush of morning, the winged gleams of the April noonday, the parting crimson glory of the ripening summer sun. And directly below them the eye rested on a more advanced line of hanging woods, divided by bright patches of pasture or furrowed crops, and not yet deepened into the uniform leafy curtains of high summer, but still showing the warm tints of the young oak and the tender green of the ash and lime. Then came the valley, where the woods grew thicker, as if they had rolled down and hurried together from the patches left smooth on the slope, that they might take the better care of the tall mansion which lifted its parapets and sent its faint blue summer smoke among them. Doubtless, there was a large sweep of park and a broad glassy pool in front of that mansion, but the swelling slope of meadow would not let our traveller see them from the village green. He saw instead a foreground which was just as lovely—the level sunlight lying like transparent gold among the gently-curving stems of the feathered grass and the tall red sorrel, and the white umbels of the hemlocks lining the bushy hedgerows. It was that moment in summer when the sound of the scythe being whetted makes us cast more lingering looks at the flower-sprinkled tresses of the meadows."

There is the picture, vivid as a photograph, and it is plain to see that the artist loved the meadow better than the hill, and the corn-field more than the open, wind-swept moor. Her Loamshire is, of course, Staffordshire; her Stonyshire is Derbyshire, and the barren hills of which she speaks are the mountains of the Peak. Those who read *Adam Bede* again after visiting this part of England, and wish to identify the places named in the novel, will not err if they interpret

Oakbourne as Ashbourne, Snowfield as Wirksworth, Eagledale as Dovedale, Norbourne as Norbury. The Donnithorne Arms at Hayslope or Ellaston is the square, substantial-looking Bromley Arms at the cross-roads. Donnithorne Chase is either Wootton Hall, a fine old mansion a mile to the north, or Calwich Abbey, a mile to the east on the wooded right bank of the Dove—probably, we should say, the former.

George Eliot's father, Robert Evans, was the son of the Ellaston wheelwright, who had moved across the river into Staffordshire from a little Derbyshire hamlet by the side of Raddles Wood, nearly a mile north-east of Roston. His two-storeyed brick cottage on the roadside with a strip of garden in front is still standing, though it has long since been divided into two small tenements. The adjoining workshop, where Evans plied his craft, is now a wash-house and rough cowshed combined. In one of the tenements dwells a lonely old woman, long past eighty and nearly blind, who has some fragmentary recollections of the Evanses, and is puzzled to understand why wandering tourists come and ask her about *Adam Bede*. She had heard tell of it, she said, and had once tried to read it, but she liked bigger print and something "of greater profit." Many attempts have been made to identify the characters which appear in *Adam Bede* and refer to actual fact the leading incidents of the novel. It is admitted that George Eliot had her own father, Robert Evans, in her mind when she conceived the character of Adam, while her uncle, Samuel Evans, was the prototype of Seth. Dinah Morris, the preaching body, was suggested by her aunt, Elizabeth Evans, the wife of Samuel, though in the novel Dinah eventually married Adam. George Eliot herself, when questioned on this point, wrote to a correspondent, "You see how she (*i.e.* Elizabeth Evans) suggested Dinah; but it is not possible you should see, as I do, how entirely her individuality differed from Dinah's." This Elizabeth Evans, whose maiden

name was Tomlinson, was born at Newbold, in Leicestershire. As a girl, she moved to Nottingham, where she worked as a lace-mender, and becoming "converted" in 1797 at the little chapel of Beck Barn, she became an enthusiastic evangelist, adopting Quaker dress and preaching with great fervour. While she was in Nottingham a young woman named Mary Voce was sentenced to death for poisoning her youngest child. The case excited great public interest, and Elizabeth Tomlinson and another woman obtained permission to visit the girl in prison. They stayed with her day and night until the morning of the execution, and, after bringing her by their prayers and entreaties to repentance, rode with her in the hangman's cart to Gallows Hill, escorted by huge crowds and a procession of Methodists singing hymns. This was the incident which suggested to George Eliot the poignant scene in *Adam Bede*, where Dinah Morris visits Hetty Sorrel, after she has been condemned to death for the murder of her child. The fame of Elizabeth Tomlinson's success as an evangelist got noised abroad, though in those days a very powerful section of Methodist opinion was firmly opposed to women preachers, and she accepted an invitation to work at Tutbury. It was at Ashbourne in 1802 that she met her future husband, Samuel Evans, who had been persuaded to walk over from Snelstone to hear "a very pious female from Nottingham" preach. They were married in Nottingham, then migrated to Norbury, and eventually, after living a few years in Derby, they moved, in 1814, to Wicksworth, where we shall meet with them again.

Wootton Hall, at the back of Ellaston, was for some time the home of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who began to write his *Confessions* there and composed many of his *Letters on Botany* in a spot called the "Twenty Oaks." John Gisborne recalls the tradition in his *Vales of Weever*:

> "Lo! where these oaks encircling meet,
> There Genius formed his rural seat;

Oft in calm solitude the sage
Composed his fascinating page ;
Or, bending on the turf, surveyed
With nice regard each flower and blade ;
Or marked gay Nature's liberal smile,
Admired Britannia's temperate isle ;
Yet thought on Gallia's lovelier vales,
Her brighter founts, her softer gales,
Thought on her chains with Freedom's sigh,
And all the Patriot kindled in his eye."

At the outset Rousseau was not fortunate in the weather. It snowed incessantly and the wind cut his face. But, he wrote, "in spite of all, I would rather live in a hole of one of the rabbits of this warren than in the finest rooms in London."

There is little to choose between the rival roads to Ashbourne, whether one takes the Staffordshire bank of the Dove from Ellaston through Mayfield, or the Derbyshire bank through Clifton. We will take the latter for the fine view it commands on leaving Norbury, looking down to Calwich Abbey where Handel used to stay—and across to the inviting Weever Hills. The Dove is never far away from us in this pleasant valley till we reach Clifton ; then the road to Ashbourne trends to the right, and in a short two miles we enter the outskirts—having long seen the tall, pointed church spire—of this delightful Derbyshire town—outskirts which the railway people and the builders have done their very best, and with lamentable success, to despoil of their picturesque beauty.

The Grammar School, Ashbourne.

CHAPTER V

ASHBOURNE: MEMORIES OF DR. JOHNSON

Ashbourne is one of the pleasantest country towns in all England, delightfully situated at the head of a little valley under the hills and standing at the gate of exquisite scenery. The one thing lacking is that the Dove does not contrive somehow to flow through the town—it achieves no less marvels elsewhere—for it is nearly two miles away at Mayfield. Ashbourne has thus to be content with an undistinguished brook, named the Henmore or the Schoo. The town shows to least advantage from the Clifton Road by which we entered it. Any other road of entrance—and there are eight in all—does it ampler justice, even the level approach from Mayfield and Staffordshire which leads us past the glorious old parish church. This is set on the very outskirts of Ashbourne, and the broad thoroughfare runs straight until it reaches the Market Place, where it splits in all directions, and either climbs

the hills at once or dips down Dig Street over the Henmore before it sets you on the way to Derby.

In the coaching days and the many centuries of laborious travelling before Macadam, Ashbourne was naturally a town of importance, owing to its being such a meeting place of the roads. It lay on the main line of traffic from Manchester to London. Whether you came by Buxton or by Leek you passed through Ashbourne—the rival routes met there, and together climbed the fearful hill leading up out of the town to Derby. It was a hill so steep that they had to cut another, only less steep, which joined the Old Hill or Spittle Hill in a long mile. Canning, who used to visit the Boothbys of Ashbourne Hall, celebrated it in lines which are almost invariably misquoted:

> "So down thy hill, romantic Ashbourne, glides
> The Derby Dilly carrying three insides;
> One in each corner sits and lolls at ease,
> With folded arms, propt back and outstretched knees;
> While the pressed bodkin, pinched and squeezed to death,
> Sweats in the midmost place and scolds and pants for breath."

So Canning wrote in *The Loves of the Triangles*, his clever satire on Erasmus Darwin's *Loves of the Plants*. He had probably been nauseated with Darwin's praises in the drawing-room of the dilettante Boothbys, for Darwin was a Derbyshire man and his vogue was enormous. The Derby Dilly was, of course, the Derby Diligence, but the curious fact about these lines is that they owe their present fame to O'Connell's happy application of them, in the House of Commons, to Lord Stanley and his handful of malcontents. Canning was an enthusiastic lover of Ashbourne and its neighbourhood. One of his earliest poems was entitled *A Spring Morning in Dovedale*—it is unhappily lost—and not long before his death he told a friend how eagerly he was looking forward to revisiting "haunts which to him had been scenes of almost unalloyed enjoyment."

Ashbourne is rich in all sorts of odd buildings and charities, quaint almshouses, built by pious founders, which afford comfortable retreats for old age with house, garden, and weekly income, where the ten poor men or ten poor women have nothing to do but sit at the door of their "*domus eleemosynaria*"—how the rippling syllables contrast with the brutal abruptness of "workhouse"—watch their vegetables grow, and gossip or quarrel with their neighbours. But Ashbourne, to many of those who visit it, is chiefly distinguished from its having been for many years the playground of Dr. Johnson, who spent his holidays here in the company of his old school fellow and lifelong friend, Dr. Taylor. Johnson was born at Lichfield, but, as we saw in the last chapter, his father came from Great Cubley, midway between Ashbourne and Sudbury, where the family had lived for generations. Their status was very humble—the Johnsons were day labourers—and, as the Doctor used to say with a laugh in his later years, it was all the more creditable for him to be so zealous an advocate of the respect due to rank and birth when he hardly knew who or what his own grandfather had been. There are still people in Ashbourne who remember two brothers called Johnson living at the corner of Dig Street. They were saddlers, big powerful men over six feet high and broad in proportion, and the general belief was that they were not very distant relations of Dr. Johnson and offshoots of the Cubley stock.

The house where Johnson used to visit Dr. Taylor is still the best private residence in the town, now that Ashbourne Hall has been put to other uses. It lies opposite the Grammar School and near the church, the last house but one on the south side of the principal street, a solid, substantial brick building known simply as "The Mansion." Local tradition says that the façade was designed by a travelling Italian architect, who also designed the façade of Dr. Boswell's house—the name is most appropriate—on the other side of the street. We know from Johnson himself that the house was

partly rebuilt in 1784, for he makes rather fretful reference to the building operations. "On the 20th," he says, "I came hither and found a house half built of very uncomfortable appearance; but my room has not been altered. That a man worn with diseases, in his seventy-second and seventy-third year, should condemn part of his remaining life to pass among bricks and rubbish appears to me very strange." Evidently

Dr. Taylor's House, Ashbourne.

Johnson disliked the presence of masons and bricklayers, and the successive layers of dust which their dilatory processes entail. His room was in the little side wing which fronts on to the street, and evidently does not belong to the plan of the main frontage. It is now used as a bath room!

The mansion itself has many beauties, principally the entrance hall with its charming old Adams fireplace and stucco wall decorations. The staircase and gallery are supported by marble columns. The railing of this gallery used to bear a

shield displaying an anchor—said to have been Dr. Taylor's coat of arms—but this vanished many years ago. The dining-room is finely panelled, but the chief apartment is the octagon room, built out by Dr. Taylor into the garden at the back, for the purpose, so legend saith, of entertaining King George III. Here hung the famous lustre chandelier which Boswell speaks of. The hook remains; the chandelier unfortunately is gone, no one knows whither—though it was there within living memory. The statues which stood in the niches round the room found a home in the Ashbourne Town Hall, but have since been destroyed. The mansion in old days was full of old pictures and old furniture, but a disastrous sale took place in the middle of last century and everything seems to have been scattered to the four ends of the earth.

The garden at the back has suffered considerable change. The summer house belongs to the Taylorian era, and is naturally called after Johnson; in the paddock beyond the fountain has been filled up, though the outline of its basin can still be traced in the depression of the ground. The old entrance gates are visible near the railway footbridge in a field now quite detached from the property. On very great occasions guests were brought round this way instead of being taken to the street door. Once, when Dr. Taylor was expecting the Duke of Devonshire to dine with him, he gave orders that his Grace was to be driven twice round the grounds so that he might imagine the garden was twice its real size. At its foot runs the Henmore, diverted by the North Western Railway Company, in order that they might set their ugly new station on the site best suited to their plans. Dr. Taylor spent considerable sums in the construction of cascades and the laying down of pipes for his fountain; and it is believed that he too diverted the stream from its natural course, with the result that the lower parts of Ashbourne were liable to be flooded after a heavy thunderstorm. Thus the railway company simply transferred it back to its original bed, and since then there have

been no more floods, though, as I saw the Henmore, with old tins and broken crockery protruding from its trickle of dirty grey water, it seemed impossible to conceive it running in spate. Even in Dr. Taylor's day, if the dead cat of Boswell's story and the choked cascade were common incidents, the presence of the Henmore flowing through the grounds must have been a somewhat doubtful joy. After Dr. Taylor's death the mansion was sold to a Mr. Webster and was occupied by a retired officer of the name of Powell. Subsequently a branch of the Tissington Fitzherberts lived in it, and then a Colonel Wilkie. The house now belongs to the railway company and is the residence of Dr. Sadler.

Dr. Taylor had been an old schoolfellow of Johnson's at Mr. Hunter's school in Lichfield. They were also contemporaries at Oxford, Johnson being at Pembroke College, and Taylor at Christ Church. Boswell tells us that he had a good estate of his own, and he certainly enjoyed splendid preferment in the Church, for he was Rector of Market Bosworth and of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and a Prebendary of the Abbey. Bosworth can have seen little of him, for he was usually in residence in London during the winter months, and he spent his summers at Ashbourne, where he was "a diligent justice of the peace." In politics he was devoted to the predominant Devonshire interest. But despite his Whiggism, which, to his friend's high Tory way of thinking, was "a negation of all principle" and, "no better than the politicks of stock-jobbers and the religion of infidels," he retained the estimation of Johnson, who once said of him to Boswell, "Sir, he has a very strong understanding." Boswell draws his portrait for us in his own inimitable way when he says that "Taylor's size and figure and countenance and manner were that of a hearty English squire, with the parson superinduced." He was, in fact, the typical squarson, thoroughly content with the world, which he looked upon with complacent eyes, pleased with Providence for calling him to a good station in life,

Church Street, Ashbourne.

enjoying his rents and his benefices, liberal to his inferiors, hospitable to his friends, and thoroughly comfortable and warm in every way. Everything belonging to the Reverend Dr. Taylor was well appointed. His "post-chaise was large and roomy, drawn by four stout, plump horses and driven by two steady, jolly postilions." His establishment matched his equipage; "his house, garden, pleasure-grounds, table—in short, everything good and no scantiness appearing"; and he possessed a treasure of an upper-servant in Mr. Peters, "a decent, grave man in purple clothes, and a large white wig, like the butler or major-domo of a bishop." Dr. Johnson's own domestic arrangements in London were apt to be of a rather untidy and haphazard order, but he loved luxurious quarters when he found them, and he was well pleased to take his holidays at Ashbourne.

We hear of him being there between 1737 and 1740, and of the frequent visits he used to pay to Bradley Hall, three miles to the east. This was the residence of a Mrs. Meynell and her daughters, "who were, perhaps, in point of elegance and accomplishments, inferior to few of those with whom he was afterwards acquainted." So a note in Boswell assures us. The eldest daughter afterwards married one of the Tissington Fitzherberts, and of her Johnson used to say that "she had the best understanding he had ever met with in any human being." At Bradley Hall, too, he began a life-long friendship with Mrs. Hill Boothby, sister of Sir Brooke Boothby of Ashbourne Hall. But it is of Johnson's visits to Ashbourne at a much later date, from 1770 onwards, that we have the fullest accounts preserved, not only in Boswell, but in Johnson's letters to his friend, Mrs. Thrale. In these we find him describing in his most sportive vein, how Dr. Taylor kept a farm, and how the pride of the farm was a great bull. This bull was his boast—there was not his equal in Derbyshire, he said, and the talk at his table often veered round to the bigness of bulls and the hugeness of this one in particular.

So Johnson writes:—"I have seen the great bull and very great he is. I have seen likewise his heir apparent, who promises to inherit all the bulk and all the virtues of his sire. I have seen a man who offered a hundred guineas for the young bull, while he was little better than a calf." Next year he again solemnly informs his Streatham correspondent that the great bull has no disease but age, and that he hopes in time to be like him. But what does Mrs. Thrale think? A man had come to Dr. Taylor the other day to rent a farm from him. He was shown the bull, and had the unblushing effrontery to say that he had seen a bigger! His prospects of getting the farm fell at once to zero, for the offence was gross. Twelve months later Dr. Johnson again wrote, "We yet hate the man who had seen a bigger bull."

However, Johnson found a topic even more alluring than bulls in strawberries and cream. "I have never wanted strawberries and cream," he writes in 1771, and once more he adds in a postscript, "*Toujours* strawberries and cream." Happy man! A voracious eater at any time, Johnson's appetite for fruit, and especially for wall-fruit, was limitless. Mrs. Thrale says that he used often to eat seven or eight peaches before he began his breakfast, and she had frequently heard him protest that he had never in his life had quite as much as he wished of wall-fruit, except once, and that was at Lord Sandys' seat at Ombersley. Unfortunately, the quantities are not stated; one suspects that he cleared a whole wall-side. Lucy Porter at Lichfield used to keep the best gooseberries on the bushes in her garden till Johnson came down to pick them, and he often records the pleasure it gave him to gather currants. "Dr. Taylor wants to be gardening," he writes in 1775. "He means to buy a piece of ground in the neighbourhood, and surround it with a wall, and build a gardener's house upon it, and have fruit and be happy." To have fruit and be happy! After all, that is not a bad ideal for summer in the country. But Doctor Taylor was evidently capricious in his

fancies. Sometimes it was his cattle, sometimes his deer, sometimes his poultry, and again sometimes his garden that was the hobby of the moment, and his guest had to enter into the spirit of the thing as best he could.

Boswell's first visit to Ashbourne took place in 1776, when Dr. Taylor sent the roomy post-chaise, which so pleased him, over to Lichfield to fetch him and Johnson. They only stayed a day or two, but next year Johnson said to Boswell, "I shall go to Ashbourne, and I purpose to make Dr. Taylor invite you. If you live awhile with me at his house we shall have much time to ourselves, and our stay will be no expense to us or to him." The invitation duly arrived, and on September 14th—a Sunday afternoon—Boswell describes how he drove up to Dr. Taylor's, and how his host and Johnson came out to the door before he alighted from the chaise and gave him cordial welcome. Johnson, we fancy, greeted him with special warmth, for he was apt to become a little bored at Dr. Taylor's for want of vigorous conversation. Taylor, he confided in Boswell, was "a very sensible acute man and had a strong mind. He had great activity in some respects, and yet such a sort of indolence that if you should put a pebble on his chimney piece, you would find it there in the same state a year afterwards." He was obviously not the man for Johnson to strike sparks out of, and so when Dr. Butter, of Derby, asked Johnson and Boswell to go over and drink tea with him, the former promptly accepted. "I am glad of this," he said, "for," adds Boswell, "he seemed weary of the uniformity of life at Dr. Taylor's." Moreover, as he wrote a year or two later, "Dr. Taylor is one of the people that are growing old. He is not much amiss, but he is always complaining." The old pluralist was not so brisk as he had been, and as both he and his friend were rapidly nearing their seventieth year, that is not surprising. It used to worry Johnson to contemplate the flight of time, and the thought of death terrified him; so, instead of celebrating his birthdays he strove to conceal them. An amusing instance of

this took place at Ashbourne. There was a crystal lustre, or chandelier, in Doctor Taylor's "large room," and Johnson, who had the tastes of a boy in some respects, was very anxious to see it lighted up. Taylor said it should be lighted on the next evening. "That will do very well," said the blundering Boswell, "for it is Dr. Johnson's birthday." Thereupon, Johnson frowned and declared somewhat sternly that "he would *not* have the lustre lighted the next day."

Those who would follow all the doings of Johnson and his *fidus Achates* at Ashbourne in 1777 must look up their Boswell for themselves, and read how he records their visit to the Grammar School across the way and the narrative of the day they spent in Derby, driving over in their host's chaise, and finding on their return that Dr. Taylor—wise man—had gone to bed without sitting up for them. It was during this drive that Johnson made the famous confession, "If I had no duties and no reference to futurity, I would spend my life in driving briskly in a postchaise with a pretty woman; but she should be one who would understand me and would add something to the conversation." What, one wonders, would the Doctor have said to flying over a good road, as we moderns understand it, in a powerful motor car, either with or without the pretty woman? It would have stirred him to the wildest exhilaration, but we doubt whether he could have kept up his stream of talk at such a pace, and we are sure that he would have denounced in the roundest fashion the modern woman's motor veil and head-gear. If he used to bid his hostess, Mrs. Thrale, go and change the ribbons in her cap when they did not please his fancy, what would he have said to goggles? It was also on the road back from Derby that he solemnly warned Boswell to drink water only. "For," said he, in his sagest manner, "you are then sure not to get drunk; whereas, if you drink wine, you are never sure."

Johnson was quite at the top of his form during this fortnight. As we have said, the Henmore brook flowed at

Ashbourne Church, and the Henmore Brook.

the bottom of Dr. Taylor's garden, and a small dyke had been built across it to make a tiny waterfall. This had become

choked up with branches and other refuse, and Johnson one morning, in a fit of zeal, seized a pole that lay on the bank and began to push the *débris* over the falls, panting and puffing with the exertion. "He worked," says Boswell, "till he was quite out of breath; and having found a large dead cat, so heavy that he could not move it after several efforts, 'come,' said he, and throwing down the pole, '*you* shall take it now'; which I accordingly did, and being a fresh man, soon made the cat tumble over the cascade." It was in Dr. Taylor's garden, too, "at a pretty late hour on a serene autumn night," that Johnson and Boswell discoursed together on the subject of a future state and Johnson said, "Sir, I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death, but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually."

When Boswell left Ashbourne on his way north to Scotland, he took a chaise at the Green Man—which he describes as a very good inn—and was greatly pleased with the manners of the landlady, "a mighty civil gentlewoman," who curtseyed very low and presented him with an engraving of the sign of her house. Below was written, in her own handwriting, the following note:—

"M. Kilingley's duty waits upon Mr. Boswell, is exceedingly obliged to him for this favour; whenever he comes this way, hopes for the continuance of the same. Would Mr. Boswell name this house to his extensive acquaintance, it would be a singular favour conferred on one who has it not in her power to make any other return but her most grateful thanks, and sincerest prayers for his happiness in time and in blessed eternity. Tuesday morn."

Did ever a note written by polite landlady achieve such immortality as this? Was ever so gigantic an advertisement bought at a cost so small as the display of "mighty civility" and a very low bow? Of course, Mr. Boswel was pleased to name the house to his extensive acquaintance; but he did more, he named it to posterity, and the moral is plain for

those who keep hostelries to read. We will not tolerate the suggestion that this politeness on the part of "M. Kilingley" —we hope the M stood for Martha—was prompted by her knowledge that Mr. Boswell was a friend of Dr. Taylor, the local magnate. Her prayers for his welfare in this world and the next well became one who kept "a very good inn" in so charming a spot as Ashbourne and within sound of the Ashbourne bells.

We do not hear of Boswell paying another visit to Ashbourne, though Johnson did so more than once before his death in 1784. These later journeys had not the blitheness of the old ones. Ailments came crowding upon Johnson towards the end, and he talked of them much. So did Dr. Taylor, and two valetudinarians make poor company for one another. "My journey to Ashbourne and Staffordshire was not pleasant," Johnson writes to Boswell in 1782, "for what enjoyment has a sick man visiting the sick?" Yet in 1784 he was again in his old quarters from the middle of July to the middle of September. Let us hope that the days passed more agreeably that time, for three weeks later it was Dr. Taylor's mournful duty to read the burial service in Westminster Abbey over his illustrious friend. Theirs was a curious friendship, and Boswell's comments upon it are worth quoting:—

"Johnson and Taylor were so different from each other that I wondered at their preserving an intimacy. Their having been at school and college together might, in some degree, account for this, but Sir Joshua Reynolds has furnished me with a stronger reason; for Johnson mentioned to him that he had been told by Taylor he was to be his heir. I shall not take upon me to animadvert upon this; but certain it is that Johnson paid great attention to Taylor. He now, however, said to me—the date is 1777—'Sir, I love him: but I do not love him more.' As it is said in the *Apocrypha*, 'His talk is of bullocks.' I do not suppose he is very fond of my company. His habits are by no means sufficiently clerical; this he knows that I see, and no man likes to live under the eye of perpetual disapprobation."

One almost regrets that this conversation was preserved by Boswell, though we know Johnson too well to misjudge him.

If he liked luxury, he liked independence more. Yet, for a philosopher, he was, perhaps, too addicted to the pleasures of good living to be quite consistent with his principles. But all men have their weaknesses and Johnson was not exempt. There is a difference between paying "great attention" to a man and toadying him, and the long-continued kindnesses showered on him by Taylor made this "great attention" no more than his due. Taylor may have been too worldly-minded, for he had "great possessions," and he was naturally slothful and easy-going. Intellectually, he was not Johnson's equal: few, indeed, of his contemporaries were, and at times, when Johnson was bored and irritated with his host he said hard things. But at other times he said kind things which were just as sincerely meant, and we may keep pleasant remembrance of the well-to-do prebend and justice of the peace, who kept a good table, bred fat cattle, and loved an easy, placid, and common-place life.

Dr. Taylor died at Ashbourne and was buried in the churchyard close by. Strangely enough, no tablet was set up to perpetuate his memory, though for fully half a century he had played a leading part in the life of the town. It is believed, however, that the large flat stone with an illegible inscription outside the south door of the church marks the site of his grave. It was my good fortune, when I was in Ashbourne, to light upon a new reference to Dr. Taylor. It occurs in a short and hitherto unpublished manuscript written by the late Lord Denman about 1820, describing a journey from Buxton to Ashbourne. He says that the Ashbourne people still spoke of Dr. Taylor, and described him as "a very good man, only vicious," by which, adds the writer, "it was meant that he was whimsical and apt to take likings without much reason."

CHAPTER VI

ASHBOURNE CHURCH: TOM MOORE AT MAYFIELD

Before we go on to Ashbourne Church let us look at the Grammar School, a graceful two-storeyed Elizabethan building, which remains much as it was when Dr. Taylor and Johnson sat talking with the headmaster on the steep bank at the back. But it is not to remain so for long. A scheme of radical reconstruction has been prepared, which makes pretence—it is true—of preserving the character of the structure, but one knows too well what the certain upshot will be. It means destruction; and, when too late, unavailing regret. The school itself consists of one large school-room, panelled in 1885 with oak taken from Ashbourne Church, and a solitary class-room on the other side of the entrance. This used to be the abode of the usher, while the headmaster's house was—and still is—above the main school-room. It is said that Johnson himself applied at one time for the post of usher, but failed to get the appointment. Boswell, it will be remembered, says he entered for a similar post at Market Bosworth, and perhaps there has been some confusion between the two places. The Rev. William Langley was headmaster in Johnson's day and held office for forty-three years, the appointment being for life, as the Governors found to their cost when they dismissed him, and he appealed to the Court of Chancery and won. Langley was for ever quarrelling with his ushers, who were granted special keys in order to be able to lock themselves in their room against his assaults, and eventually

only one scholar was left in the Free School, while the usher took in boarders of his own across the passage. But the old school does not seem to have been fortunate with its headmasters, for in 1873 the numbers were again reduced to one. A few years later it was reorganised, and what was a Grammar School is now a Second Grade School. If Dr. Johnson were to revisit it there would be some pretty vigorous criticism on his part when he found that the classics had been turned out of doors, and that the Humanities had been banished in favour of Science. The change, however, has had the effect of giving the school a new lease of life, for, after all, the Humanities never seem to have been taught efficiently, and the school roll of honour is singularly destitute of men of distinction.

Just beyond is the parish church of St. Oswald, whose tower is surmounted by a tapering spire—some call it "the Pride of the Peak"—212 feet in height. It stands clear of houses with a long avenue of trimly kept trees dividing it from the road and the steep bank of the valley. On the other three sides is the spreading cemetery where lie many generations of the people of Ashbourne.

> "Till the Bell that, not in vain,
> Had summoned them to weekly prayer,
> Called them one by one, again
> To the Church—and left them there."

Inside, the beautiful building well merits Boswell's description of it as "one of the largest and most luminous churches that I have seen in any town of the same size." George Eliot went further and called it "the finest mere parish church in the kingdom." The latter claim could hardly be maintained, but Ashbourne Church needs no exaggerated praise. One may hope that its graceful interior has endured its last "restoration" for many years to come. The church still contains the original brass dedication tablet of Bishop Pateshull of 1241, but to me it was of more interest to be shown the

Ashbourne Church from the North-West.

little seat immediately in front of the lectern where Dr. Johnson sate, and to be told of that far off Sunday two centuries and a half ago when King Charles came to Ashbourne Church and graciously talked with Mr. Peacock, the vicar. The date was 1645; the war was raging; and the guards would be set to watch all the avenues of approach to Ashbourne.

In the north transept are the tombs for which the church is celebrated—the tombs of the two leading families of Cokaynes and Boothbys, who for very many centuries were the lords of Ashbourne Hall. The Cokaynes date from 1372 to 1592; then the Boothbys take up the story and carry it down to the middle of the nineteenth century. Ruskin refers to these table tombs of the Cokaynes within the chapel by way of illustrating his theory that "the English have always been a dull nation in decorative art." "I find," he says, "on looking at things here afresh after long work in Italy that our most elaborate English sepulchral work, as the Cokayne tombs at Ashbourne, and the Dudley tombs at Warwick (not to speak of Queen Elizabeth's at Westminster) are yet, compared to Italian sculpture of the same date, no less barbarous than these goose heads of Kirkby would appear beside an asp head of Milan. But the tombs of Ashbourne or Warwick are honest, though blundering, efforts to imitate what was really felt to be beautiful." This is semi-contemptuous praise, but that was Ruskin's way. One of the Cokaynes was slain at Shrewsbury: another was knighted on the battlefield of Tournay. However, it is not the tombs of the Cokaynes, but the recumbent figure of a child, sculptured in white marble, which draws most visitors to Ashbourne Church. The child is little Penelope Boothby, who lies on a mattress of marble, with her head resting on a pillow. This masterpiece of the otherwise almost forgotten sculptor, Thomas Banks, bears inscriptions in four languages, English, Latin, French and Italian, the English one reading:—

"I was not in safety, neither had I rest and the trouble came."

Then follows the dedication :—

"To Penelope
Only child of Sir Brooke Boothby and Dame Susannah Boothby.
Born April 11th, 1785, died March 13th, 1791.
She was in form and intellect most exquisite.
The unfortunate parents ventured their all in this Frail bark,
And the wreck was total."

Of its kind there is no more pathetic inscription on a child's monument in England, though, if it were not for the little marble figure, it would not arrest the eye as sharply as the simple stone in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, which bears no more words than these, "Jane Lister, deare child." Penelope was the granddaughter of the Sir Brooke Boothby (1710–1789) and Dame Phoebe Boothby (1716–1788) whose monument lies close by, and of whom their son, another Sir Brooke, wrote :—

"Long days, long love, indulgent Heaven bestowed,
And sweet content to gild your calm abode :
Friends who through life their faith unaltered kept,
Children who loved, who honoured and who wept.
Heroes and Kings, life's little pageant o'er,
Might wish their trophied marbles told no more."

The author of these lines composed, some time after his little daughter's death, a volume of verses to which he gave the curious title, *Sorrows sacred to the Memory of Penelope*. It is a rare book, folio in size, with a large frontispiece by Fuseli symbolical of the triumph of Love over Death, and the big type stands up boldly from the yellowing pages. But the tribute was better meant than executed. *Ipso sese solatio cruciabat*—such is the motto which the author himself selected for this unfortunate book, which tells us nothing of the pretty child herself, and merely dwells on the father's own sorrow. The only picture he draws of Penelope is when he pays a ponderous compliment to Banks :—

"Well has thy classic chisel, Banks, expressed,
The graceful lineaments of that fine form

Which late with conscious beauty warm,
Now here beneath does in dread silence rest.

"That form, as fair as fancy ever drew,
The marble cold inanimate retains,
But of the radiant smile that round her threw
Joys that beguiled my soul of mortal pains,
And each divine expression's varying hue
A little senseless clay alone remains."

This is the sort of frigid verse which Mr. Dombey might have composed with a new pen on the death of little Paul. But if Penelope was unfortunate in her father's poetry, she had the rare good fortune to be painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. In Sir Joshua's book of sitters the entry of Miss Boothby's name appears in July 1788, when she was little more than three years old. The picture (in size 28¼ ins. by 24 ins.) is one of the most pleasing of all the master's child portraits. It shows us a little girl clad in a white dress, with a dark belt, sitting on a stone sill with trees in the background. Her mittened hands are folded in her lap and her eyes are demurely cast down. She is wearing a high mob cap, which is said to have belonged to Sir Joshua's grandmother, and was, therefore, old-fashioned even in his day. The picture, which was engraved by Thomas Park, was bought at the Windus sale in 1859 for eleven hundred guineas by the Earl of Dudley. When it was exhibited at Burlington House in 1885, it was purchased by Mr. Daniel Thwaites for £20,000. Nor does its interest end here. If there had been no "Penelope Boothby" by Sir Joshua Reynolds, there would have been no "Cherry Ripe" by Sir John Everett Millais. Miss Talmage, the little girl whom Millais painted, had been to a fancy-dress ball as "Penelope," and in the famous picture, which has given pleasure to thousands, Penelope Boothby has enjoyed, what we may call, a second blaze of fame.

Moreover, Thomas Banks's masterpiece gave direct inspiration to a still more celebrated sculptor. Those who know

Lichfield Cathedral will remember Sir Francis Chantrey's exquisite monument to the two children of a Mrs. Robinson of that city. The widowed mother, in entrusting Sir Francis with the commission, expressed the wish that he should see Banks's monument to Penelope Boothby in Ashbourne Church. Sir Francis agreed, and it so happened that he made the journey from Bakewell to Ashbourne in the company of Ebenezer Rhodes, the author of *Peak Scenery*. They arrived late in the evening, and, on the following morning, entered the church, where Sir Francis made a slight outline drawing in his note-book. In the afternoon they visited Dovedale and returned to Ashbourne for a late dinner. The London coach from Manchester, by which they intended to travel, passed through Ashbourne at one o'clock in the morning, and consequently they had a few hours to wait. About ten o'clock Sir Francis drew out his note-book, and, after spending half an hour in arranging some fronds of fern which he had gathered during the day, asked Rhodes not to disturb him, as he was going to make a sketch for the Lichfield monument. Working rapidly and intently, he was not long over the drawing, and Rhodes tells us that practically no alteration was made from the original sketch which Chantrey thus threw off at the close of a long and tiring day. The monument drew enormous crowds when it was exhibited in London at the Academy; it was engraved by Stothard; and on Chantrey's death the legend grew up that the design was really Stothard's and not an original one of Chantrey's. Another story was that Chantrey, before making his sketch, was at his own request locked up in Ashbourne Church for two hours. But in face of the explicit statement of Rhodes in a *Tourists' Guide*, which he wrote some years later, it is impossible to doubt that the Lichfield design was Chantrey's own, and conceived by him while waiting for the coach in an Ashbourne inn, with a rough sketch of the Ashbourne monument before him.

Ashbourne people, to whom the Boothby memorial had become a kind of idol, were intensely jealous of the Robinson memorial at Lichfield, which threatened to eclipse its fame. A visitor to Ashbourne in 1829 says that when "the venerable matron that shows the monument" heard him say to a friend that he considered Chantrey's was the finer effort of the two, she tossed her head with an air of insulted dignity and said in her most acid tones, "Humph! the like of that's what I now hear every day. Hang that fellow Chanty or Canty, or what you call him! I wish he had never been born." One more story of the Boothby memorial! It relates to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, brother of the Duchess of Kent, uncle both of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, and subsequently first King of the Belgians. This popular Prince, who had married Princess Charlotte, only daughter of the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., and prospective heiress of the British Throne, was once passing through Ashbourne and asked if there was anything in the town specially worth a visit. They told him, of course, of the sculpture in the church. One of the suite then asked for further information and received the answer, "It is a monument, Sir; no one passes through without seeing it, for its like is not to be met with in England —it is a monument to an only child, whose mother died——." Prince Leopold drew back. "Not now," he said, "not now. I too have lost——," and he turned away from the carriage in tears. The Princess Charlotte had died in childbirth, a year after their marriage, in 1817.

They say in Ashbourne that Sir Brooke and Dame Susannah Boothby parted at the grave of their child Penelope and never spoke to one another again. If so, it adds another touch of poignancy to the words of the inscription, "the wreck was total." But local tradition usually needs verification. I was told -in a whisper -that Dame Susannah was an actress. But the actress was another Lady Boothby, wife of Sir William Boothby, who married *en secondes noces*, and when past sixty,

the fascinating Mrs. Elizabeth Nesbit, *née* Cranstoun, known to fame on the boards of the Early Victorian stage as Miss Mordaunt. Her Rosalind and Lady Teazle, her Lady Gay Spanker and Constance, were the delight of Drury Lane. She married Sir William to the town's amazement in 1844: he died two years later: and she followed him in 1858.

Another place of pilgrimage for those who visit Ashbourne

Tom Moore's Cottage, Mayfield.

is Tom Moore's cottage at Mayfield. From Ashbourne Church go down the road to the bridge over the Dove—the bridge which in 1817 saw one solitary and footsore man limp down the hill from Leek, with a stick in one hand and a blanket thrown round his shoulders. He was the sole representative of the host of starving Blanketeers who had gathered at Manchester with the intention of marching to London and demanding reform. The police had scattered them at the start: their enthusiasm oozed away in the chill of a winter

morning and only one reached Mayfield Bridge. We go up the hill, turn into the fields by the side of the village school, and a meandering footpath takes us out into a little lane, on the other side of which is a small farm in the adjoining field, easily recognisable by its sloping roof and high chimneys. This is the Mayfield Cottage where Tom Moore wrote *Lalla Rookh* and lived for nearly four years, from the summer of 1813 to March, 1817. When he first settled there he was entranced and delighted with the spot. "I have got a pretty little stone-built cottage," he writes to his friend James Corry, "in the fields by itself, about a mile and a half from the very sweetly situated town of Ashbourne, for which I am to pay twenty pounds a year rent, and the taxes come to three or four more. But though this sounds so cheap, yet the expenses of furnishing and the beautiful capabilities of the place, which tempt one into improvements so irresistibly, will make it, I fear, rather a dear little spot to me. Once done, however, to my mind—if the supplies will enable me to do it so—I think I shall not be easily induced to quit it, but shall keep it on still as a scribbling retreat, even though I should, in a year or two, find it more to my purpose to live in London. But certainly until my *grande opus* is finished I could not possibly have a more rural or secluded corner to court the Muses in." The cottage stood upon "a kind of elevated terrace above the field." There was no fence round it, and as Moore and his wife were kept in constant alarm lest their little children should fall over, they had the terrace "paled" along the frontage of sixty yards. "You can't think how our cottage is admired," he wrote, and though it was "a little nut-shell of a thing," there was a room to spare for a friend, and he did not lack company.

The scenery of Ashbourne does not find its way into *Lalla Rookh*, for in that poem the imaginative Irishman gave free rein to his luxuriant fancy, and was more Oriental than the Orientals. But while he lived at Mayfield Cottage he

wrote the verses on the bells of Ashbourne Church which have given pleasure to thousands who never heard of *Lalla Rookh.*

"Those evening bells! Those evening bells,
How many a tale their music tells
Of youth and home and that sweet time
When last I heard their soothing chime.

"Those joyous hours are passed away,
And many a heart that then was gay
Within the tomb now darkly dwells,
And hears no more those evening bells.

"And so 'twill be when I am gone:
That tuneful peal will still ring on;
While other bards shall walk these dells,
And sing your praise, sweet evening bells!"

This is not great poetry; the thought is commonplace; the sentiment is not deep. But the lines cling to the memory, and one can hear, as one reads, the cadences of the bells rippling over the meadows and the intervening hill from the tall steeple at Ashbourne. Herbert Spencer tells us that when he was a boy staying with his uncle at Hinton Claverhouse and very homesick, this song was "a continual solace" to him. It was, he adds, "a homesick song popular at the time." The death of an Ashbourne lady of Moore's acquaintance prompted the stanzas commencing:—

"Weep not for those whom the veil of the tomb
In life's happy morning hath hid from our eyes."

And it was into an Ashbourne drawing-room that he rushed one day flourishing an open letter in his hand and exclaiming, "Don't be surprised if I play all sorts of antics. I am like a child with a new rattle. Here is a letter from my friend, Lord Byron, telling me he has dedicated to me his poem of 'The Corsair.' Ah! Mrs. ———, it is nothing new for a poor poet to dedicate his poem to a great lord, but it is something passing strange for a great lord to dedicate his book to a poor poet."

Moore's life at Mayfield Cottage was not very eventful. He worked at his desk ; he paid visits ; a child was born and died there. All the amusements of Ashbourne were within reach—travelling theatrical companies and such occasional delights as the "fantasmagoria and automatons" which he saw in 1814. But gradually he tired of the monotony, and craved for a change. He wanted to be nearer London, now that his fame and reputation were assured, and, after sundry journeys, he found a cottage at Hornsey—then quite in the country. "We are off to-night for town," he writes on March 11, 1817. "I have taken the inside of one of the coaches to ourselves, and trust in Heaven that I shall carry all my little establishment safely to the end of their long journey. I have paid all my bills here, and believe that we carry with us the respect and good wishes of everyone. Indeed, I have never experienced more real kindness than from some of our friends in the neighbourhood." Hornsey was reached in safety, but the cottage proved to be overrun with rats and one of the chimneys smoked, so that by November Moore was on the wing again, this time alighting at Sloperton, near Devizes, whither we need not follow him.

Thirteen years later Moore paid a flying visit to Mayfield Cottage. He was on his way with Hume to stay at Alton Towers. Moore saw the old place with changed eyes, and in the intervening years the cottage had been allowed to fall into disrepair. "Hume," says Moore, "was much interested as well as surprised to see the small, solitary, and now wretched looking cottage where all that fine 'orientalism and sentimentalism' was engendered. It had for some time fallen into low farmers' hands, and was now in a state of dirt and degradation. Yet, there, the luxurious Rogers passed a few days with me ; there poor Stevenson composed one or two of his smartest things ; and there (still more extraordinary) I remember giving a dinner to Sir Henry Fitzherbert, the then High Sheriff of the County and some other provincial

grandees." Another visitor to Mayfield Cottage about the same time records that, as he approached, a figure scarcely human appeared at one of the windows, and a thin, shrill voice called through the lattice, "Come in, gentlemen, come in. Don't be afeard! I am only a tailor at work on the premises." The writer continued: "This villainous salutation damped sadly the illusion of the scene, and it was some time before we rallied sufficiently from the horrible desecration to descend to the poet's walk in the shubbery, where, pacing up and down the live-long morning, he composed his *Lalla Rookh*. It is a little confined gravel walk, in length about twenty paces, so narrow that there is barely room on it for two persons to walk abreast; bounded on one side by a straggling row of stunted laurels; on the other by some old decayed wooden palings; at the end of it was a huge haystack."

"The luxurious Rogers" -as Moore called him -was, of course, Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, author of those still remembered but little read poems *The Pleasures of Memory* and *Italy*, the latter of which owes its place on most book-shelves to its fine steel engravings from Turner's pictures. Rogers was rich enough to be able to retire from business when still young; and being a man of culture and taste, and devoted to literary society, he gathered round him at his breakfast parties in St. James's Place all the wits in the world of letters. When Wordsworth died Rogers was offered the Poet Laureate-ship, and no act in his long life became him better than his passing on the chaplet to Tennyson. Byron summed up Rogers best when he said, "If Rogers has not fixed himself in the higher fields of Parnassus, he has, at least, cultivated a very pretty flower-garden at its base." A charming compliment and well deserved; but here we are only concerned with him as a visitor to Derbyshire, and the traces are faint. However, there is a charming passage in a letter which he wrote to Moore on July 28th, 1813, acknowledging one in which Moore told him

that he had settled near Ashbourne. "I cannot tell you," he writes, "the pleasure I felt when I received your letter from Fairyland. You are now where you ought to be; and I hope you have already initiated Psyche into all the mysteries of Dovedale. If you saw the kingfisher I saw there, pray let me know! How far are you from Thorp-cloud, and Ilam Churchyard, and Oak-over Hall—names consecrated in my memory before I was fifteen? I can assure you I wander with you both very often and flatter myself I sometimes hear myself mentioned in those regions of enchantment." Psyche was Bessy, Tom Moore's pretty young wife, very busy with her babies at this time, but quite one of the belles at the Ashbourne assemblies and much admired, especially when she wore a wonderful oriental turban at her husband's request. One would like to know where "the retired green lane" is situated, in which she and Tom Moore practised country dances for half-an-hour on their way to a dinner party, when they found they had started off much too early.

Mayfield Cottage is now an ordinary well-kept farmhouse, with yard and outbuildings. It faces down the valley towards Norbury, is surrounded by finely-timbered meadows, and at the back of the house is a pasture with steep slopes, and a few striking old trees. With one of these is associated, in local legend, Moore's poem to the woodpecker, though that was written and printed some ten years before. The house is ivied over the front door, between the upper windows, and the garden has evidently been considerably curtailed since Moore's day, when it is said to have contained two arbours, in both of which the poet kept writing materials that he might fix his lines at once upon paper as he paced up and down. I was told that until a few years ago there was a pane of glass in one of the upper windows, on which Moore had written a stanza with a diamond, but this has been removed and sold to a curiosity hunter.

From Mayfield we retrace our steps to Ashbourne. One

sees with pleasure that Boswell's inn, The Green Man, still survives practically unaltered in the main street, though as the sign declares, which projects a long arm towards the opposite houses, it has taken to itself the additional name of the Black's Head, whose presentment, like that of the bold forester in green, is plain to see. The explanation is simple. The original Black's Head was an old posting house a little higher up the street, and its business was taken over by The

The Green Man, Ashbourne.

Green Man. Ashbourne used to have many other coaching houses, each with its arched entrance from the main street into the yard: now only one or two survive. One sees their gradual disappearance with regret, for they were typical of old-fashioned comfort and good living. The Green Man at Ashbourne belongs to a genial company of English inns, which includes the Bull at Rochester, the Angel at Grantham, the Royal at Falmouth, and many more that could be mentioned, though the pace at which the old order is changing

has been rapidly accelerated in recent years. Their like will never be built again, for it is obviously inconvenient to have the kitchens on one side of the main entrance and dining-rooms on the other, with a draughty passage between. The rooms, too, are low ceilinged and the bars are small. Yet I know nothing in the shape of an inn at home or abroad which is so grateful to the eye of a traveller as the entrance to these inns which I have mentioned—never without a joint or game hanging from the hooks overhead to give pleasant suggestion of robust dinner and robust appetite, good cheer, good welcome, and good speed.

At the west end of Ashbourne is Ashbourne Hall, the home of the Boothbys, and, in the earlier building which stood on the site, of the Cokaynes. It has recently been converted into an hotel, but the building itself is of no particular interest, save for the fact that Prince Charles Edward slept here when he and his Highlanders reached Ashbourne on their march to the South in the '45. The oaken door of the room he occupied is still preserved. King James on that memorable occasion was proclaimed in the Market Place, but we will postpone the story of Derbyshire's connection with the '45 till we reach Derby.

Ashbourne is now a quiet little country town, where the talk is greatly of bullocks, as it was in Dr. Taylor's day, and of shire horses, for which the district round about is famous. It was gay enough, however, at the opening of the nineteenth century, when, owing to its central position and its distance from the coast, it was chosen by the Government as a place of residence for some of their most important prisoners of war. In 1804 no fewer than two hundred French officers were living in Ashbourne on parole, including three well-known generals, Boyer, Pajean, and Roussambeau. They had to give their word not to go more than a mile from the town and return by nine at night, on the ringing of a bell. If they were late they were fined a guinea, which was given to the person who had informed against them. General Roussambeau was a very

conspicuous figure, for he was never seen in anything but the dark green uniform of the French Sharpshooters, with Hessian boots, and three stars and a plume of feathers in his cap. On one occasion Lord Macartney took General Boyer with him for a short tour in Derbyshire, and Roussambeau, hearing they were at Matlock, rode over without leave to join them. An English gentleman staying with the Arkwrights at Cromford happened to be of the party, and quizzed Roussambeau about his breaking bounds. The testy Frenchman was greatly offended, and on returning to Ashbourne sent him a guinea—the informer's fee. This time it was the Englishman's turn to be insulted, and he wrote up to the Transport Board in London telling them the whole story. The result was that Roussambeau was removed from Ashbourne, and taken to a place in Huntingdonshire, where he was kept in close confinement. He was eventually killed at the battle of Leipsic. Probably Ashbourne was one of the few places which actually made money out of the great war, for we are told that the French officers spent in the town not less than £30,000 a year.

CHAPTER VII

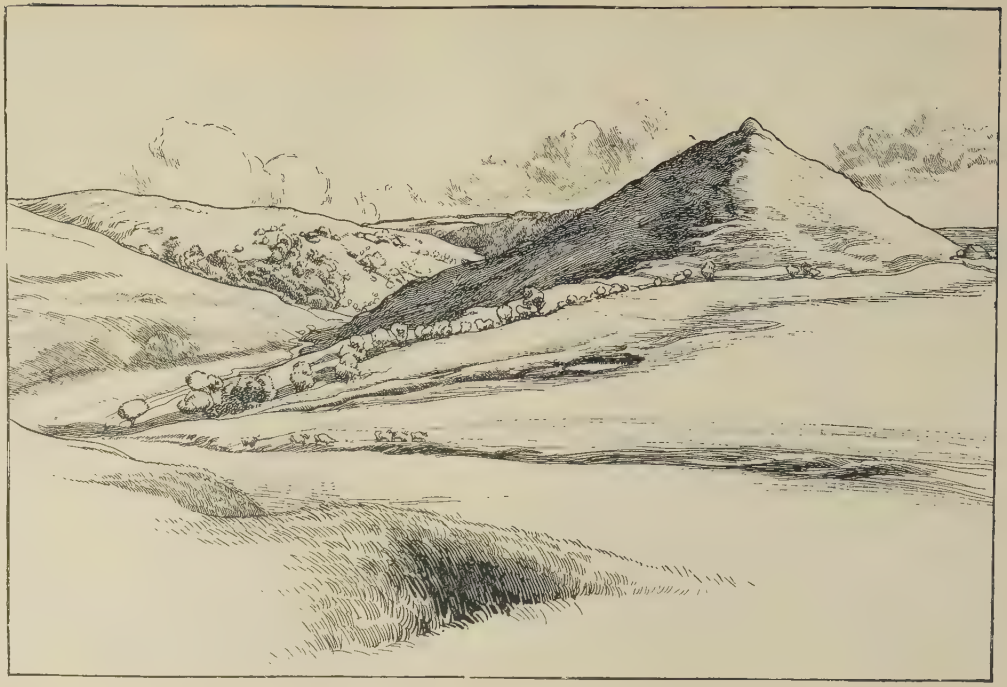
DOVEDALE

Of the many ways of reaching Dovedale from Ashbourne the pleasantest is to take, not the main Buxton road through Fenny Bentley, but the Mappleton and Okeover road, which climbs steeply out of the market place on the left hand. Arrived at the top, it dips down immediately into one of Derbyshire's myriad valleys, and crosses the Bentley brook hurrying to the Dove, "full of very good trout and grayling," as Piscator tells Viator in the second part of *The Complete Angler*, but rather too much encumbered by wood. After passing in front of Callow Hall and turning sharply round the hill-side to the right, a long mile brings us to the attractive hamlet of Mappleton, set in a green valley of its own with a pretty Hall in the corner. Here we go down to the bridge over the Dove. Okeover Hall is half a mile beyond on the Staffordshire side—there has been a Squire Okeover of Okeover since the days of the Plantagenets—but we do not cross the river. A footpath to the right follows the winding course of the Dove through a long succession of fields, all pasture, and divided by rough walls of grey stone. No approach to lovely scenery could be more charming than this, and straight ahead of us, rising high above the crest of a ridge between, is the cone of Thorpe Cloud, the outpost of the Dovedale hills, with the edge of Bunster in close company.

The valley gradually narrows, well wooded on either side, and the path sometimes clings to the side of the Dove and sometimes trails across the meadows. It is a delightful walk, though no surpassing beauty can be claimed for it, for scores of footpaths in England run by the side of equally gracious streams, where the scent of the fields is just as sweet, the flowers just as abundant, and the hedgerows just as vocal.

A mile and a half from Mappleton bridge the Dove flows below the tiny Norman church of Thorpe, perched on the top of the high bank. Just beyond, the river sweeps round the curve of a steep plantation of firs on the opposite bank, and we reach Caldwell Bridge. Though no more than a cart track crosses it, it is broad and spacious, and a solitary projecting buttress seems purposely designed to invite the traveller to linger. And linger he will if he be wise, bending over the parapet to watch the trout, or admiring the woods on the Staffordshire side, or looking up stream at Bunster's bulk and irregular edge. Half a mile further on, the Manifold—mysterious river that flows underground for part of its course—joins the Dove, and then we come to the cross road running east and west from Thorpe to Ilam, over a spur of Thorpe Cloud. Here we are at the entrance to the reaches of the Dove which bear the name of Dovedale proper.

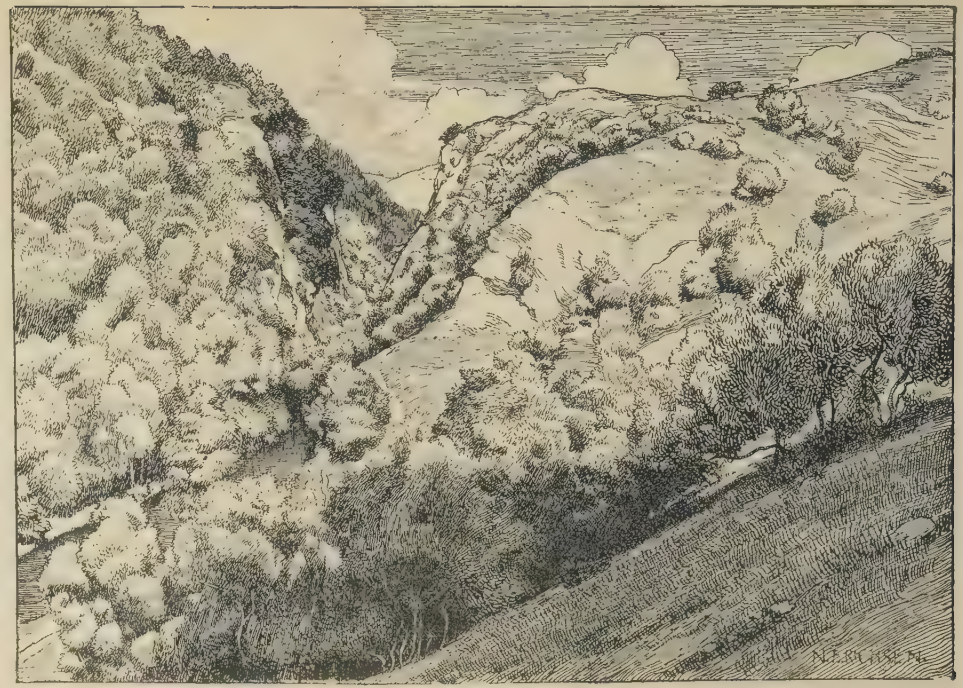
Ilam is a mile away down the road to the left, a model village where prettinesses have run wild, with elaborate modern cross and a modern Hall that is a medley of almost every known style of architecture. The situation is superb. The Manifold here describes a great looping bend, and its banks rise steeply and thickly wooded in a magnificent amphitheatre. The Hall and church—the latter contains one of Chantrey's best-known sculptures—stand deep bowered in gardens in the middle of the loop, and look completely cut off from the outside world. They are said to have suggested to Dr. Johnson—who, in his usual masterful way, refused to believe that the Manifold disappeared underground—the idea of the Happy



Thorpe Cloud, and the Entrance to Dovedale.

Valley of Rasselas. Here, too, Congreve wrote his once famous comedy, *The Old Bachelor*. But these things belong to Staffordshire. Let us get back to the little bridge over the Dove and take the footpath through the fields which leaves the weir on our left hand. In a few hundred yards we turn rightwards with the stream, quit the open valley, and find ourselves in a delightful ravine. Thorpe Cloud rises on the right into a shapely cone, and the Dove flows between it and Bunster, which here throws down a great spur terminating in what is known as the Castle. On either side the hills are high, with green slopes breaking here and there into masses of rock, but the general character of the ravine is one of peaceful regularity, and the impression is deepened by the broad walks on either side of the stream. This reach is about three-quarters of a mile in length, and the Dove itself flows placidly along with no deep pools to retard its course. At the head of the reach, Lin Dale branches off to the right around the eastern slopes of Thorpe Cloud—a dry, bare dale running up from the river to the village of Thorpe, between the Cloud and Thorpe Pasture.

Dovedale from Thorpe Cloud to Dove Holes deserves leisurely exploration. With time at command one needs no persuasion to visit this fairy spot again and again; and even the most hasty visitor should contrive to go through the glen both up and down stream, and also to take the walk along the hill tops on the Derbyshire side. At the castle rock the Dove twists almost at right angles, and the direction of our path up stream changes from north-east to north-west. The character of the scene is also transformed, for instead of comparatively smooth hillside the ravine becomes densely wooded. On the Staffordshire bank the woods continue practically without a break, rising high and steep from the river's edge and composed of lovely trees, a dense mass of foliage of every variety of green. On the Derbyshire side—to which the path keeps throughout—the bank is more open and more irregular in form; the trees are not so luxuriant, and the ground for the most part does not



The Straits, Dovedale.

rise so high. Along the first reach from the Castle is a beautiful broad strip of greensward; then the path leaves the river side and gradually climbs in a slanting course in order to surmount a curious knoll which projects out from the main cliff. This rises to a little peak, whence we obtain one of the most beautiful views in the dale, for the limestone rocks show bare and rugged, here in massive cliff, there in fantastic pinnacles, and from our elevation we can follow the line of the winding cleft. Those who are interested in recognising groups of rocks by their names—names which are mostly of late date and not particularly apposite—will find occupation in Dovedale, which boasts a Lover's Leap, Twelve Apostles, Jacob's Ladder, and sundry other proofs of limited imagination. Then on the Derbyshire side comes a break in the hills—Sharplow Dale—beyond it the cliff rises high and bare, and above the path is the curious opening known as Reynard's Cave, approached by a rough scramble up a stony moraine. It is a natural arch in a great projecting rib of rock, commanding noble views up and down the stream, and forms the gateway to two caverns known as Reynard's Hill and Reynard's Kitchen. These are not to everyone's taste. "If you like that sort of foolishness," as Disraeli once said, "that's the sort of foolishness you like." Again the path leads down to the stream and a few hundred yards higher up on the Staffordshire side is the beautifully shaped mass of Dovedale Church, with limestone spires springing from among the trees. Then the dale narrows to the Straits and, as the river contracts between rocks rising almost straight from the water, the path is little more than a rocky foothold, which in flood time is covered with water. On the further side of the Straits is a little wood, and then again the cliff comes down to the river in a beautiful rock which bears a close resemblance to a Lion's Head. When we pass it and look back, the dignity of the strong lion's face is remarkable. Beyond this we approach the handsomest group of rocks in the dale, known as the Pickering Tors, a great rounded bastion of

limestone with five distinct projecting points, the Lion rock on the extreme right, and on the left a commanding tor with a cavernous hole at its base. These cliffs mount high above the river with trees in the foreground and a grassy slope ascending to them. Facing them is the Ilam Rock—sometimes called the Pickering Tor—a tall, detached, needle-shaped rock, standing up out of a deep pool in the Dove. Below is a small rapid, and beyond a pleasant lawn.

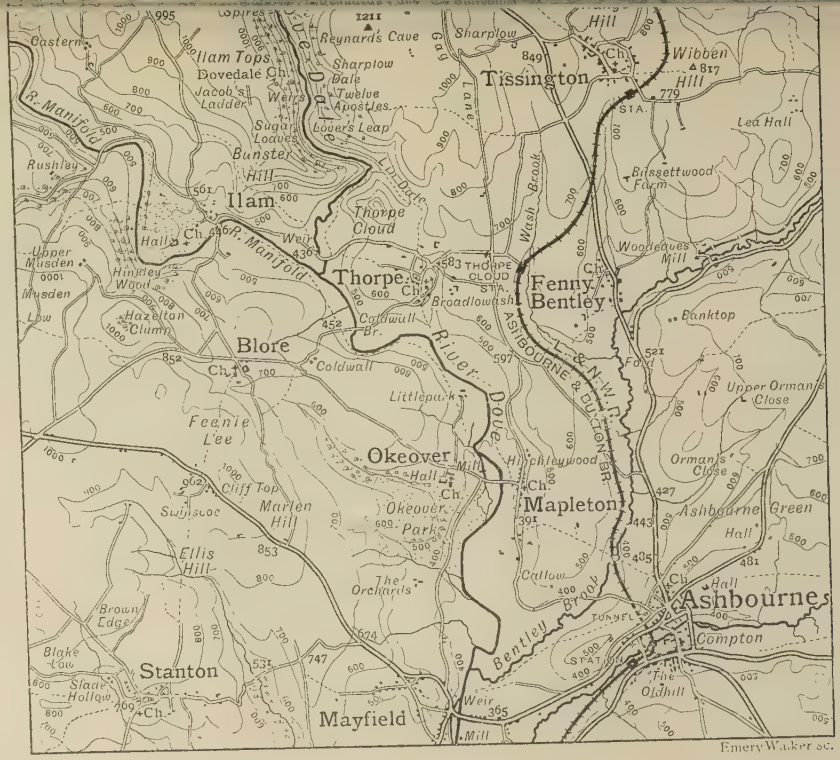
Here, on the Staffordshire side, the woods give way, first to scrub, then to bare rock surmounted by a regiment of pines, and then the gaunt hill frowns down on Hall Dale at its side. The river now bends sharply to the right and the narrow ravine we have been following is transformed. The opposite bank becomes a hill covered with thin pasture, while in front of us on the Derbyshire side rises a noble hill with fine serrated edge, called "The Nabs," clad with stunted trees for three-quarters of the way up its slope, and then gradually falling away to the left in graceful and smoother outline. A few hundred yards bring us to the Dove Holes, two great arched recesses in the rocky hillside, the larger having a span of fifty-five feet and a height of thirty. The holes are shallow and no more than natural curiosities.

Of the Dove itself we have said nothing, but the Dove throughout is the good fairy of the scene. Nowhere is there a more lovely stream, just, and only just, big enough to be called a river. It is held up by tiny weirs for the fisherman's behoof, often only a few hundred yards apart, but the pools are not deep and the water is always flowing and babbling, and always clear and pure—an ideal home for the trout which throng its delightful retreats. The gracious woods, the high hills, the cliffs and spires are all a lovely foil to this "Princess of rivers," a stream

> "By whose falls
> Melodious birds sing madrigals."

It must anger anyone with decent feeling to see the littering rubbish with which the dale is often choked after the half-day

DOVEDALE
from
Hartington to Ashbourne.
Natural Scale, 1:75,000.
Scale of Miles
0 ¼ ½ 1 1½ miles
Heights in feet thus:- 1283
Contours 1250
Footpaths .....
Hartington
Heathcote
Biggin
Alstonfield
Hopedale
Milldale
Alsop-en-le-dale
Parwich
Parwich Ch.
Moneystones
Bonktop
Lord Dale
Hand Dale
HARTINGTON STA.
End Low
Newhaven Inn
Ch.
Hall
Crossland Slacs
Dale-end
Biggin Grange
Pike Pool
Wolfscote Hill
Wolfscote Grange
The Whin
Narrowdale
Gratton Hill
Dragber Tor
Coldeaton
Dale-head
ASHBOURNE & BUXTON BR.
L. & N.W.R.
Johnson's Knoll
Bigginmoor
Aleck Low
Pikehall
Gotham
Ragsmoor
Parwichmoor
Lowmoor Farm
Steep Low
The Rakes
Hope Marsh
Hope
Townend
Stanshope
Shining Tor
Baley Hill
Hanson Grange
Crosslowbank
Dale-end Farm
Parwich Hill
Parwich Lees
ALSOP-EN-LE-DALE STA.
River Dove
River Manifold
N


Eastern
Ilam Tops
Dovedale Ch.
Jacob's Ladder
Reynard's Cave
Sharplow Dale
Twelve Apostles
Lovers Leap
Sugar Loaves
Bunster Hill
Dove Dale
Sharplow
Tissington
Wibben Hill
Lea Hall
Bassettwood Farm
Woodeaves Mill
Fenny Bentley
Bankton
Upper Ormans Close
Ormans Close
Ashbourne Green
Hall
Ashbourne
Compton
The Oldhill
Mapleton
Okeover Hall
Okeover Park
Okeover Mill
Cliff Top
Marlen Hill
Swinscoe
Ellis Hill
The Orchards
Callow
Bentley Brook
Ilam
Ch.
Hall
R. Manifold
Rushley
Upper Musden
Musden Low
Hinkley Wood
Hazelton Clump
Thorpe Cloud
Thorpe
Broadlowash
Coldwall Br.
Blore
Coldwall
Littlepark
River Dove
Feenie Lee
Wash Brook
Gallows Lane
Ashbourne & Buxton Br.
L. & N.W.R.
Tunnel
Brown Edge
Blake Low
Slade Hollow
Stanton
Mayfield
Weir
Mill
Emery Walker sc.

trippers have walked down it. These are brought by the new railway from Buxton to Ashbourne, which has "opened" Dovedale to thousands who never saw it before. They may admire and enjoy, but unhappily they do not always respect.

From the Dove Holes a steep track climbs up Nabs Dale to the Ashbourne and Buxton high road and to Alsop-le-Dale station. It winds between stern wild cliffs on either side, affording half way up a pretty view across to Alstonefield church, and leads to Hanson Grange, a fine old Derbyshire homestead, which has a recorded history of nearly six centuries. Hanson is a corruption of Huncedona, itself a corruption of Han-Syn-Dune, *i.e.*, the Hill of High Sin. Why so called we do not know, but the name is probably derived from some dark deed committed there in the days when the Danes, hard pressed by the Saxons, had fastnesses on The Nabs. In 1240 Roger, the son of Robert de Huncedone, gave all his property at Huncedone to the Black Monks of Burton Abbey, who were also owners of the neighbouring Boston Grange. Burton Abbey was dissolved in 1538, and the Grange has since passed through several hands, including those of Evelyn the Diarist, who inherited it through his daughter-in-law and promptly transmuted it into cash. A foul murder was committed here in 1467, on the Saturday before the Feast of St. John the Baptist, the victim being one John Mycock. John de la Pole of Hartington struck him on the left side of the head; Henry Vigurs of Monyash stabbed him in the breast; John Harrison shot him in the back with a bow and arrow, and Matthew Bland, of Hartington, hit him on the head with a club-staff. Evidently they were determined to make sure! When the trial was due to take place before the king in 1469, the accusers failed to appear. No doubt they had powerful friends.

Let no one, however, deem that he knows all the charms of this part of Dovedale until he has seen it from above as well as followed its sinuous course below—until, in fact, he has kept

The Ilam Rock, Dovedale.

along the high ground on the Derbyshire side of the river from Thorpe to Dove Holes. No public footpath is marked on the

map, and no right of way exists, but the Derbyshire farmers are most liberal in their interpretation of trespass, and, as the hills afford only the barest pasturage there is no fear of committing damage. The least, therefore, the exploring traveller can do, in return for their hospitality, is to take some pains in the selection of the places where he crosses the stone walls which lie athwart his path, that he may not bring a yard or two of wall to the ground behind him as he leaps. All these mountain walls are loosely built and mortarless, and little able to bear the strain of careless scrambling. Climb up the hill at the back of the Peveril Hotel—the hill known as Thorpe Pasture—and as you ascend its slope a delightful view of Ilam Hall and its dense mass of trees two miles away leaps to the eye. At the top of the ridge are traces of old stone walls of unusual breadth, attributed by local tradition to the Romans and the monks, generally hopelessly confused in the villager's mind. The monks of Burton and Combermere had granges in this district, and inasmuch as they were Roman Catholics, what more natural than for the rustic to confuse them with "the Romans"? Whatever the stone relics may be, the old road certainly ran in the depression between the hills on our right hand, and Gag Lane —such is the name it bears—is probably the oldest track from Ashbourne to Buxton. It joins the present high road near the New Inn. As we follow along the ridge a magnificent prospect of Thorpe Cloud opens out, and an altogether charming peep of the Dove as it comes down the ravine and makes its sharp turn towards Ilam between Thorpe Cloud and the Castle rock. Even the white carriage track by the riverside becomes a thing of beauty as a foil to the stream and the dark strip of greensward, while the broad, smooth lawn in the reach above the bend, and the masses of the woods in the ravine beyond, combine to form one of the loveliest views in Derbyshire. That is the view of Dovedale which lingers most freshly in my memory.

Hanson Grange, Alsop-le-Dale.

From this point it is necessary to make a little *détour* in order to get round the head of a fold in the hill, but the way is unmistakable if one aims for the river-side of the wall which crowns the opposite ridge. Follow this along the windy plateau past another small ravine, and you will see the lone homestead of Upper Ilam perched above the exquisite wood that adorns the right bank of the Dove. This wood bears us company for a long mile. Just beyond is a sudden dip; then the distant hills of the Peak begin to rise into view, and we obtain glorious glimpses down into the dale at our feet, where the pinnacles and spires, which look so high from the level of the stream, are dwarfed by the high hill behind them, over whose shoulder, as it slants sharply down to the Dove, are vistas of winding valleys and bare hillsides. An easy descent takes us down to the river bank by the Dove Holes.

"Was you ever in Dovedale?" So Byron once wrote to Tom Moore, and continued: "I assure you there are things in Derbyshire as noble as in Greece or Switzerland." Who will say Byron nay? Dovedale also enchanted Tom Moore. "It is the very abode of genii," he wrote to his mother in 1812, after a tour with his friend Rogers. This tour was evidently entirely successful, for Moore, in a letter to Corry, speaks of "that most poetical of all spots, Dovedale," while Rogers recalls his pleasurable recollections of "Fairyland, those regions of enchantment." Or see what Prebendary Gilpin says—the *arbiter elegantiarum* at the close of the eighteenth century in all matters relating to the picturesque—a rather heavy and pompous divine, but with a genuine enthusiasm for travel and landscape.

> "Such scenes enrapture Gilpin's heart
> When charmed he leaves the realm of art,
> High heaven and earth his thoughts engage,
> And Taste and Virtue crown the sage."

What Gilpin said was law to thousands until Ruskin arose and taught his countrymen to look with other eyes at other ideals. "On the whole," says Gilpin, "Dovedale is perhaps

The Lion's Head Rock, Dovedale.

one of the most pleasing pieces of scenery of the kind we anywhere met with. It has something peculiarly characteristic. Its detached perpendicular rocks stamp it with an image entirely its own, and for that reason afford the greatest pleasure. For it is in scenery as in life: we are most struck with the peculiarity of an original character, as long as there is nothing offensive in it." This is cold-blooded enthusiasm, but Gilpin had exhausted his praise on the Lakes. Elsewhere he says :—" From the description given of Dovedale, even by men of taste, we had conceived it to be a scene rather of curiosity than of beauty. We supposed the rocks here formed into the most fantastic shapes and expected to see a gigantic display of all the Conic Sections. But we were agreeably surprised. The whole composition is chaste and picturesque, and beautiful in a high degree."

About the same time the well-known painter and engraver, Dayes, visited Dovedale, and said of it in the published account of his tour :—" It is of that high cast of character which Pallas holds among the females in poetry. Borrowdale, in Cumberland, is sublime from its magnitude: yet being destitute of wood it wants the power to please. All there is barren and desolate; here beauty reigns triumphant. Delightful Dovedale!—In thee Nature exhibits one of the truest of her productions! Beautiful spot! To be feelingly alive to such wonderful works is true piety such as is not to be found in the bustle and artifice of society, where all pray to be forgiven their sins rather than for that power which might enable them to avoid committing any. Great and beneficent Creator of the universe, deign to accept this tribute of a feeling heart, while my soul overflows with gratitude." Poor Dayes! A few years later, in 1804, he took his own life in despair at the world's lack of appreciation. Yet he, we fancy, enjoyed Dovedale more than Gilpin. One of the earliest detailed descriptions of Dovedale is that which Ebenezer Rhodes wrote for his *Peak Scenery*, a fine quarto

volume for which the sculptor Chantrey did the drawings and "gratuitously presented them to the writer, as a token of his friendship and a mark of attachment to his native county." This appeared in 1818, and was reproduced in 1824 without the illustrations. It was the first good tourist book for Derbyshire, though it makes no pretence of covering the whole county, and, despite its stilted style in the purely descriptive passages, it is well worth reading.

Strangely enough, Dovedale and the Dove have not fared well at the hands of those who have essayed to sing their charms in verse. Byron, Moore and Rogers gazed and admired, but never turned a stanza in praise of the pretty stream. Wordsworth, indeed, makes some amends in an exquisite lyric, one of the mysterious poems to Lucy which remain a riddle unsolved, but the mention of the Dove is, so to speak, accidental.

"She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love."

"A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye,
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

"She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be:
But she is in her grave and O,
The difference to me."

Who was Lucy—this country maid whose memory inspired the poet to write, while he was wintering at Goslar, in Hanover, in 1798, that short series of poems which are like to nothing else in our language?

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,
Shall pass into her face."

That Lucy was a real person whom Wordsworth had loved, who can doubt as he reads that other poem where the poet recalls how, while he rode to her cottage, the bright moon suddenly dropped behind the roof, and the chill thought smote him, "If Lucy should be dead!" No abstraction ever prompted lines like these. Yet we do not know who Lucy was: and it is not even established beyond doubt that Wordsworth visited this part of Derbyshire. No record exists, and in all probability none will now be found. Wordsworth preferred to take with him to the grave the secret of Lucy; but one likes to think, while walking in Dovedale, that Wordsworth, of all English poets, was here before us, and that it was the beauty born of the murmuring sound of the Dove which passed into the face of the girl he had loved in his youth.

The laureate of the Dove is, of course, Charles Cotton, of Beresford Hall, but we will reserve his praises till we reach Beresford Dale. In the *Polyolbion* Drayton makes just a passing reference to "Moreland's own darling Dove," and to the Muse which

> "To the Staffordian fields doth rove,
> Visits the springs of Trent and Dove."

The rhyme reminds us that the country folk still pronounce the river's name as though it rhymed with rove, not with love. Coming down to the eighteenth century we find a poem on Dovedale written by a certain Rev. Samuel Bentley in 1768. It is the sheerest doggerel. For example:—

> "But who can the wonders disclose,
> Or beauties of Dovedale display?
> Its grand amphitheatre shows
> The horrid, romantic and gay.
>
> "How finely contrasted the flocks
> All o'er the high cliffs as they climb,
> The verdure, cascades and rough rocks
> That seem as coëval as Time."

Bentley sinks to his lowest bathos when he recounts the death of the foolhardy Dean of Clogher, who tried to ride up the

hill near Reynard's Cave with a lady on the saddle behind him. The horse fell, and the Dean was mortally injured, while the lady was entangled in some bushes and escaped.

"Ah, why did you ride up so high,
From whence all unheard sing the birds?
Conduct a fair lady, ah why?
Where scarce is a path for the herds."

We come to a much truer bard in Anna Seward's friend, Squire Mundy of Markeaton, whose poem *Needwood Forest* earned the praise of Sir Walter Scott. Needwood was disafforested by order of the Duchy of Lancaster, to whom the land belonged, but the Vernons of Sudbury obtained leave that the young timber should be spared. Mundy has some pleasant lines on the Dove in this poem:—

"The British Nile,
Fair Dove, comes winding many a mile,
And from his copious urn distils
The fatness of a thousand hills."

Or again, describing the breaking of dawn over the valley, he says:—

"Dove laughs and shakes his tresses bright,
And trails afar a line of light."

Yet another bard of Needwood and the lower reaches of the Dove was the elder Gisborne, author of *Walks in a Forest*, a poem which ran through many editions a hundred years ago. Gisborne was vicar of Yoxall before he became Prebendary of Durham, and Wilberforce, Hannah More and the Evangelicals of the Clapham set frequently visited him there. He says of Dovedale, but not in his simplest or happiest manner:—

"There, 'mid disjointed cliffs and tranquil shades
Low in his native dale, with stream as pure
As melts from Alpine snow, Dove laves his rocks
Wild as by magic planted, yet with grace
Of symmetry arranged: now foaming darts
Along the stony channel, tufted isles
Now circles, now with glassy surface calm
Reflects the impending glories of his hills."

This is correct but uninspired, while the long poem entitled *A Tour of the Dove*, written in 1821 by Mr. John Edwards, a wine merchant of Derby, shows us a very minor poet struggling far out of his depth. Edwards was under Byronic influence, but the *Childe Harold* stanza was immeasurably beyond his powers. He conscientiously follows the Dove from where it falls into the Trent to its source on Axe Edge, and weaves into his poem references to the scenes through which it flows. But his lines rarely run smoothly, and he constantly lapses into hopeless commonplace. There is hardly a single stanza where the poet has not obviously had to rack his brains to find the requisite rhymes. Let us quote the one on the Lion Rock. It is a fair example of his method :—

> "Such is the final scene magnificent !
> These are the closing portals of the dale,
> And lo, within, but placed more eminent,
> A Lion sculptured on colossal scale
> Rears like a Sphinx : his body and his tail
> Are hidden, but his noble head and breast
> Declare the guardianship of this proud vale
> On his stern magnanimity may rest.
> Approach, ye tourists ! he will harm no royal guest."

Mr. Edwards had no particle of humour, or he would never have begun the seventy-seventh stanza thus :—

> "O Chantrey, thy incomparable skill
> Could I command, I might employ it now :
> For on the apex of that conic hill
> There stands—in listless apathy—a cow."

As Jeffrey said of Wordsworth on a famous occasion :—"This will never do."

Ann Radcliffe, the lady novelist whose ponderous and creepy novels of the imagination brought her thousands of pounds, while Fanny Burney and Jane Austen were content with tens, must of course needs break into song to the Dove, in flagrant imitation of Keats :—

"Oh stream beloved by those
With fancy who repose
And court her dreams 'mid scenes sublimely wild,
Lulled by the summer breeze
Among the drowsy trees
Of thy high steeps and by thy murmurs mild."

And then she continues in her best *Mysteries of Udolpho* vein :—

"But at the midnight hour
I woo thy thrilling power,
While silent moves the glowworm's light along,
And o'er the dim hill tops
The gloomy red moon drops,
And in the grave of darkness leaves thee long"

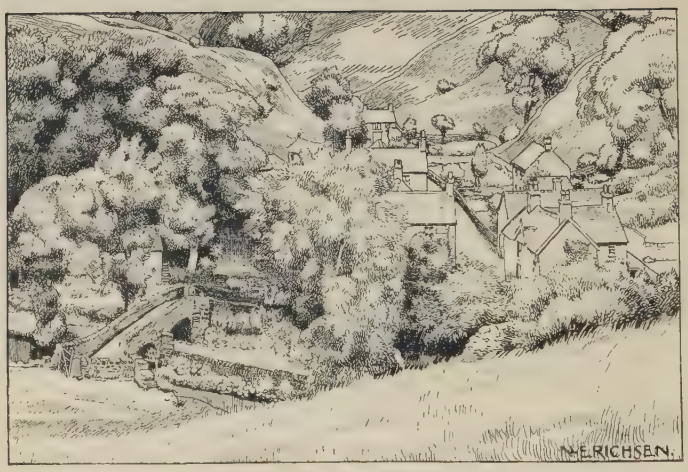
This from a lady who would no more have visited Dovedale at midnight than she would have ventured alone into one of her ghost-ridden cloisters! To Ann Radcliffe succeeds Eliza Cook with her tinkling guitar :—

"Sweet pass of the Dove! 'mid rock, river, and dingle,
How great is thy charm for the wanderer's breast;
With thy moss-girdled towers and foam-jewelled shingle,
Thy mountains of might and thy valleys of rest."

Was ever such sickly sentiment expressed in otiose epithets sung to a one-fingered accompaniment? And yet what a model Charles Cotton had set them!

"O my beloved Nymph, fair Dove!
Princess of rivers! How I love
Upon thy flowery banks to lie!"

Perhaps Byron and Moore and Rogers, and all the many poets who have wandered down the banks of Dove, were wise in not entering into competition with those delightful lines!



Viator's Bridge, Milldale.

CHAPTER VIII

BERESFORD DALE AND HARTINGTON: FENNY BENTLEY AND TISSINGTON

Let us follow the valley of the Dove. After its short, sharp twist to the east by the Dove Holes it turns north again for a mile to the hamlet of Milldale. There is little wood on the steep sides of the hills, and, despite some fine crags, the scenery looks bare and dull after the luxuriant beauties through which we have just passed. The obscure hamlet, lying in a cup-like hollow, takes its name from the mill which ground the corn of the farmers round about until half a century ago. By its side is Viator's bridge, tiny as ever. "What's here?" he cried in amazement, after coming down Hanson Toot in great trepidation, "the sign of a bridge? Do you use to travel with wheel-barrows in this county? . . . . This bridge certainly was made for nothing else. Why! a mouse can hardly go over it; it is but two fingers broad." It is a picturesque little structure with quaint

arches, built, like Alstonefield Church, up the hill to the left, of a stone which is quarried nowhere in the neighbourhood.

Viator and Piscator had come down the hill on the right from near Alsop, quitting the road along which they had journeyed from Ashbourne near the New Inn, an ancient road-side house which greatly belies its name, though it has recently suffered a sea change. Viator had trembled at the prospect of riding down the steep incline. "I think," he said, "it is the strangest place that ever, sure, men and horses went down, and that, if there be any safety at all, the safest way is to alight." And alight he did, giving his horse to Piscator's servant to lead while he scrambled down on foot. In Cotton's day this hill was called Hanson Toot from the neighbouring Hanson Grange of which we have already spoken. The word "toot" itself means hill, and is, indeed, usually found in conjunction with it, as in the place-names and surnames of Tothill and Toothill—not uncommon in the north of England.

From Milldale on to Load Mill—where are a farm and some cottages—our footpath by the stream gives place to a road, but thenceforward up to Beresford Dale we resume the turfy or stony track by the riverside. The valley itself is but sparsely wooded, and the Dove flows between closely nibbled hill slopes, covered here and there with moraine like falls of small pieces of rock. They were busy dipping sheep as I passed through the dale—an amusing enough spectacle to the townsman's eyes. Several score sheep were bunched together in a flock on the river bank, carefully minded by an alert collie which, if any wandered too far away in search of pasture, promptly rounded them up again into a compact mass. The sheep did not enjoy their dipping, with the loop of a chain, attached to a stout pole, placed round their necks, and then drawn up and down the stream by the brawny arms of a shepherd. Glad were they to quit the water, and, lacking the sense of a dog to shake themselves, they looked miserable and woe-begone, and uncomfortably surprised at the heaviness

of their dripping fleeces. An aged patriarch of the dale sate placidly in his trap and smoked and watched. This was an up-to-date dipping; lower down the stream by Dove Holes I had seen a more Homeric spectacle, where a shepherd stood up to his waist in the river and the sheep were thrown in to him by his comrade on the bank. The shepherd took them in his arms despite their reluctance, clutching frantically at their wool if they struggled, and dipping them much as the old bathing women used to dip young children in the sea. It made one's arms ache to think of wrestling with half-a-dozen of these bleating creatures; yet the shepherd had a fair-sized flock to handle ere his day's work was done.

Nothing calls for remark along the two miles from Load Mill to Drabber Tor and Dunge Bottom, where a track runs up to the high ground on the right through a gorge in the hills. The scenery is monotonous from its lack of variety, but it has a quiet beauty of its own, and the peace which reigns there is profound. No other sound is heard save that of the chattering river. For the next mile and a half the dale keeps the same character, though with finer crags and some dense masses of woods; then gradually the hills on the Staffordshire side begin to recede from the river and we get views of a fine continuous range stretching away to the north-west. The path at length traverses an open meadow to a delightful little wood of young trees. Here a cart track crosses the river, but we keep forward and reach the Bear's Ford, where legend says that the last bear was killed in England. Many other places, of course, claim the same distinction. Here are stepping stones and a footbridge, and near by, in the adjoining plantation, is the Warm Well, whose water obligingly grows warmer as the thermometer falls. Crossing the footbridge, we enter Beresford Dale proper by a closely-shaven grassy walk, which is soon exchanged for a well-wooded little ravine with a succession of tiny weirs set close together. At its further end—it is all on a miniature scale—is the famous Pike Pool, a

delightful spot of rustic seclusion, where for once the Dove has dug a deep hole for her waters, beneath a high bank of

The Pike Pool, Beresford Dale.

luxuriant trees. Standing up out of the pool on the Derbyshire side—the path has crossed over for the moment into Staffordshire—is a tapering spire of limestone, half covered with lichens and creepers, like the Ilam Rock. Behind it the hill

rises abruptly, with bold escarpments. This is the pool which fishermen see in dreams. Then a foot-bridge takes us across to Derbyshire once more, where the path soon quits the river and bears away through the open fields on the right.

But as, in deference to notice boards which point away from the river, we find ourselves quitting the banks of the Dove, we ask, "Where, then, is the Fishing House, sacred to fishers?" Public access to it is now denied; the path from the foot-bridge has been closed by the present owner. One is almost resigned thereto by the thought of how the Fishing House of Walton and Cotton would suffer at the hands of the barbarian half-day invaders. Better closed than destroyed! Yet I found it possible even from the meadows of the Derbyshire side to get a good look at this most celebrated and delightful little structure, situated so charmingly in an elbow bend of the Dove. Let me quote a charming sonnet by Mr. T. Westwood:—

"What spot more honoured than this peaceful place?
Twice honoured, truly. Here Charles Cotton sang,
Hilarious, his whole-hearted songs, that rang
With a true note, through town and country ways,
While the Dove trout—in chorus—splashed their praise.
Here Walton sate with Cotton in the shade
And watched him dubb his flies, and doubtless made
The time seem short, with gossip of old days.
Their cyphers are enlaced above the door,
And in each angler's heart, firm-set and sure,
While rivers run, shall those twin names endure,
Walton and Cotton linked for evermore—
And *Piscatoribus sacrum*—where more fit
A motto for their wisdom, worth, and wit?"

Even Samuel Bentley, of whose doggerel we gave a specimen in the last chapter, rises to a pleasant fancy when he writes of the Fishing House:—

"Here Cotton his temple has reared,
Which yonder peninsula shows;
By fishermen loved and revered,
For sacred to fishers it rose:

"Close shaded those osiers among
The father of fishers would lie;
And while silver Dove was his song,
Improved for deception the fly."

The Fishing House, which figures so alluringly in the pages of *The Complete Angler*, is now carefully tended, and looks delightfully prim and neat with its pretty lattice windows and wooden shutters on all four sides, its steep pyramidal roof of stone tiles surmounting the low stone structure, and its chimney jauntily set at one corner. Walton, so Cotton tells us, only saw it a-building before the roof was on, but he saw the famous cipher stone which now adorns the centre of the arch above the door, beneath the broader stone that bears the legend "*Piscatoribus sacrum.*" Here Piscator (Cotton) and Viator sate them down and Cotton smoked the pipe of tobacco which, said he, is "always my breakfast," and initiated his friend into his fishing secrets before they tried their luck in the Pike Pool. "Fine lights, finely wainscoted and all exceeding neat with a marble table, and all in the middle"—such was the interior in Cotton's day, and it remained in tolerably good order down to about 1784, though even then Sir John Hawkins, in his edition of *The Complete Angler*, reports, on the authority of a friend, that the paintings and wainscoting were much decayed. In 1814 a visitor describes the Fishing House as "much dilapidated, the windows unglazed, and the wainscot and pavement gone." Since then it has been lovingly restored, and there is no likelihood of further neglect. One misses the wainscot, and the marble table is round instead of square; otherwise the Fishing House is much as it was in Cotton's day.

Of Beresford Hall, where Walton used to stay with Cotton, only the foundations are left. It stood behind the rising ground of the Staffordshire bank of the river, a substantial two-storeyed dwelling as one sees it in the old prints, providing good comfortable quarters, where there was no waiting for

The Fishing House, Beresford Dale.

dinner and supper. Cotton's servants "knew his certain hours"—a testimony to character which one would not have expected of him. But he loved his Derbyshire home and the

pretty river which flowed through his grounds, however much he liked to have his fling in London—nothing very wild, one would imagine, if the staid Isaac Walton permitted him to call him father. Cotton got into debt, which is a bad sign; but his debts troubled him, and that is a correspondingly good one. And here, as to a sure retreat, he came when his creditors were too much for him, and lay snug in a cave till the storm blew over, and then took up his rod and angled for a trout to charm away his melancholy. It was the fashion in Charles II.'s day for men about town to write verses, and Cotton—to be in the fashion—wrote much poor stuff. But he also wrote because the Dove made him write, and he could not help it, and then he wrote like one inspired.

"Good God! how sweet are all things here!
How beautiful the fields appear!
How cleanly do we feed and lie!
Lord! What good hours do we keep!
How quietly we sleep!
What peace, what unanimity!
How innocent from the lewd fashion
Is all our business, all our recreation!"

"Oh, how happy here's our leisure!
Oh, how innocent our pleasure!
O ye valleys, O ye mountains!
O ye groves and crystal fountains!
How I love at liberty
By turns to come and visit ye!"

And do you think it possible for a poet in a mood like that to forget the Dove and the trout, and the pleasure he took in his rod and in his skill in whipping the stream? Listen to him:

"O my beloved nymph, fair Dove,
Princess of rivers, how I love
Upon thy flowery banks to lie,
And view thy silver stream,
When gilded by a summer's beam;

And in it all that wanton fry
Playing at liberty,
And with my angle upon them,
The all of treachery
I ever learned, industriously to try!"

Or again:

"Men fall in love
With thy bright beauties, and thy fairest eyes
Wound like a Parthian whilst the shooter flies.
Of all fair Thetis' daughters none so bright,
So pleasant none to taste, none to the sight,
None yields the gentle Angler such delight."

So his Muse runs on, but as no lettered person will visit Beresford Dale without reading the first few chapters of the second part of *The Complete Angler* we will not quote further. One need not be a fisherman to appreciate and love that book—indeed, many of those who love it most, and know it best, are not fishermen at all. It is its quaint flavour, its smack of old-fashioned piety, the quiet spirit it exhales, the snatches of old song, the way it transports you to the meadows till you hear the music of the stream hurrying by and all the country sounds—there lies the charm of *The Complete Angler* for the man who does not fish and so contrives to take some little interest in other things besides his book of gaudy and drab-looking flies, and the length of his coils of catgut. Isaac Walton, the pietistic old linen-draper of Fleet Street, would rub his spectacles in surprise if he could see and hear many of those who call and profess themselves Waltonians!

The real Waltonian touch is found in a charming poem by Henry Glassford Bell, of which we may quote a few stanzas:—

Isaac! still thou anglest near me
By the green banks of thy Dove,
Still thy gentle ghost may hear me
Breathe my reverence and love.

O my kindly old piscator,
See'st thou not these waters clear?
Time, thou changeling, Time, thou traitor,
Give him back,—his home was here.

Lo! at yonder bend he standeth,
Where round rocks the wave bells out,
See! with skilful touch he landeth
Now a grayling, now a trout.

Stream of beauty! winding, singing
Through the world's divinest dale,
Ever to thy music bringing
That old spirit calm and pale!

Learnéd in all honest learning,
Trustful, truthful, pure of heart;
Peaceful, blameless honour earning
By the magic of his art.

Now a trout and now a grayling
Luring from the shaded pool,
God's white clouds high o'er him sailing,
All around the beautiful!

And we may quote, too, a few blithe verses of a later-day poet, Mr. Francis Coutts, which would have delighted Cotton. They are from his poem, entitled "Angling Days":—

I care not where my steps are bent
Nor what far lands I spy,
The happiest days that e'er I spent,
Or shall spend till I die,
Were those when I a-fishing went
By Derwent or by Wye.

Or when I hastened to assail
With sympathetic rod
The darkling Dove, along whose Dale
Oft Isaac Walton trod;
And if but once I might prevail,
That hour I was a god!

Who glad as I, when morn arose
And I could sally out,
To where the shadowed ripple flows
Beloved of timid trout?
No kinship had I then with those
Who have of day a doubt!

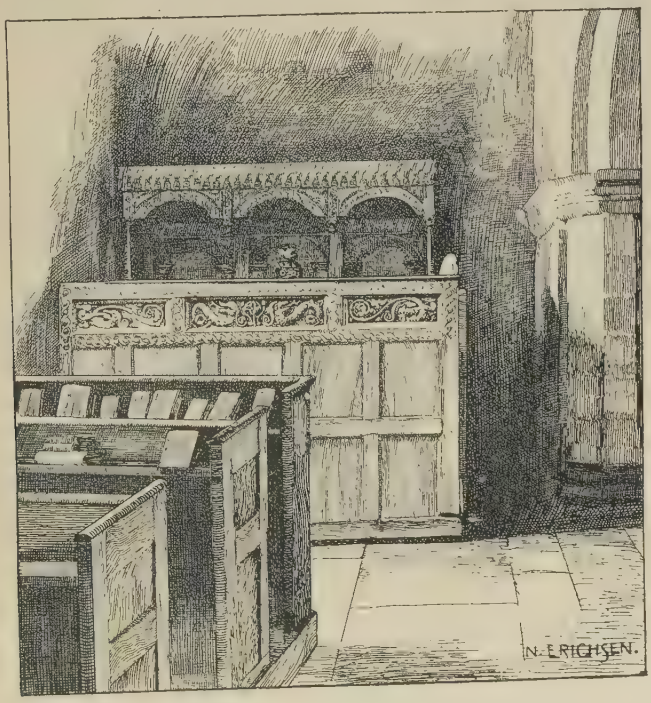
Then as across the dewy mead
I hurried to the stream,
The lark on his delirious reed
Piped to the morning beam;
And straight I felt an unknown need
And straight began to dream.

Though Cotton's house has vanished, one can still see the pew where he worshipped in Alstonefield Church, and the little Staffordshire village and fine old church will well repay the walk. The Cotton pew now stands at the east end of the north aisle, and is evidently not *in situ*. It is of oak, like the other high pews with incised patterns on the door panels, which were set up in the middle of the seventeenth century. But a hundred years since some barbarian vicar allowed it to be painted a pale duck-egg green, with the Cotton coat-of-arms coloured and gilt.

The path by the foot-bridge from the Pike Pool leads us, as we have said, away from the Dove, which one cannot quit without repeating the pretty good-bye of Viator, "Well, go thy way, little Dove! thou art the finest river that ever I saw and the fullest of fish." Hartington is a mile away through the fields, a clean, breezy, upland village or little town—it had a market once—which gives the Dukes of Devonshire the title of their marquisate. At the Charles Cotton Hotel the traveller, fresh from the Fishing House, will find an interesting little collection of old prints and portraits of Cotton and Walton—some of which are not often met with—and Hartington church is interesting both within and without. It has a fine, well proportioned tower, a curious porch with sloping roof, some ancient tombs and quaint pictures. I noticed here

an epitaph –doubtless a quotation—with a distinct touch of originality, wherein the reader was warned :—

"Wisely from earth thy fix't desires recall,
And loose betime thy root to ease thy fall."



Charles Cotton's Pew, Alstonefield Church.

And who will fail to sympathise with the feelings which prompted Mary Flint to leave an endowment of £4 a year for the church stove in winter? Like many old churches, this one at Hartington looks as though it might well be cold and draughty in winter time. The parish used to be of enormous

extent, divided into four quarters and extending up to the very confines of Buxton on the one side and to Biggin and Pikehall on the other. The north transept is still called the Biggin Chapel. Hartington church formed part of the endowment of the Minories, on Tower Hill, London, given to the nunnery on its foundation by Blanche Queen of Navarre, wife of Edward Duke of Lancaster, to whom the Hartington

Hartington.

manor had been granted on the confiscation of the estates of Robert de Ferrers, Earl of Derby.

At Hartington station—a long mile and a half uphill from the village one may take the train for a few miles back on our tracks in order to visit the two neighbouring villages of Fenny Bentley and Tissington. The former—a cluster of pretty cottages nestling round the ancient church—lies on the main Buxton and Ashbourne road at the foot of a hill three miles long with a fall of four hundred and fifty feet. The Bentley Brook meanders pleasantly near by, under old bridges,

in a bed of huge burdock leaves. Here an ancient manor house of the Beresford family, and traces of a moat and earthworks, may still be seen. Thomas Beresford, who fought at Agincourt, and Agnes his wife, lie in effigy in the little church, tied up in their shrouds above their heads and below their

Old Manor House, Fenny Bentley.

ankles, and with their sixteen sons and five daughters similarly dealt with in miniature presentment on the sides of their tomb. The sculptor had no portraits to guide him as to the features of the dead soldier and his lady, and so hid their faces in their shrouds. The effect is most bizarre. Tissington is a more imporant village two miles to the north of Fenny Bentley, lying to the east of the main road, with which it is connected by a glorious avenue of limes, more than half a mile long. Here, on Holy Thursday or Rogation Day, the Well Flowering custom which we saw at Roston had been observed for centuries, and Tissing-

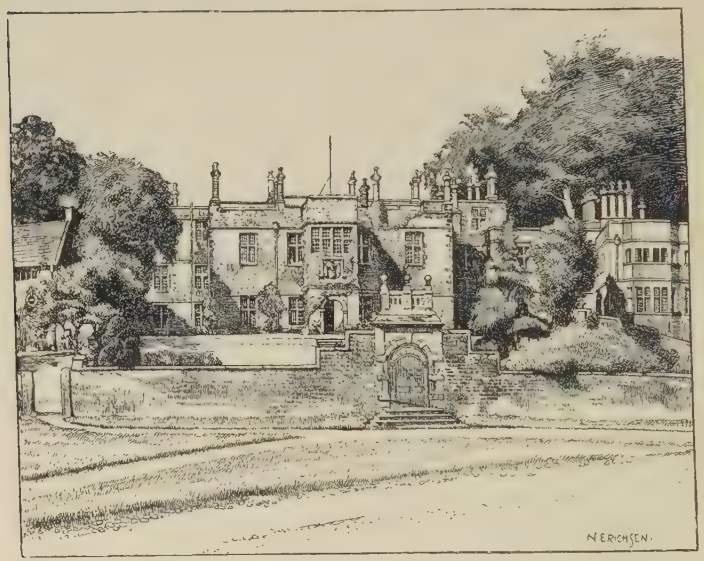
ton's five wells are adorned with flowers. These are the Hall Well—from its proximity to Tissington Hall gates—Hand Well, Goodwin Well or Yew Tree Well, the Town Well, and Coffin Well. Hand Well and Goodwin Well took their names from the farmers who lived at the adjoining farmsteads ; the name of Coffin Well is explained by its shape. Three-quarters of a century ago a Frith Well was mentioned instead of Coffin Well, doubtless from the name of the occupier of the farm.

There has been much speculation as to the origin of this charming custom. Local tradition naturally ascribes it to a local cause, and says that in bygone days, when Derbyshire was suffering from a prolonged drought, during which the springs dried up and the rivers ceased to flow, the wells of Tissington continued, as before, their plentiful supply. Well-dressing, however, was not confined to Tissington or to Derbyshire. There are traces of it in most English counties, as, for example, at St. Edmund's Well near Oxford, at Droitwich in Worcestershire, and at Brewood in Staffordshire. It is, in fact, a relic of the graceful side of paganism, the religion of the countryfolk, which one meets with in every age as far back as recorded history reaches. To crown the head of a well with flowers, or to sprinkle flowers upon a running stream, was a natural and pleasing way of expressing gratitude to the nymph or woodland deity who dwelt there and haunted the spot with beneficent presence. Christianity took over these innocent legends and pretty customs, which were part of the country life and to which people clung with great tenacity, and was wisely content to sanctify them to the service of the Church. Yet we need not, perhaps, refuse to Tissington its special reason for this observance. It is said that during the Black Death of the fourteenth century, which swept over the land with such dreadful mortality that whole villages were left derelict, Tissington escaped, and the people ascribed their immunity to the purity of their water. Such a tradition would be long kept alive and may well have contributed to the continuance of the

Tissington Well-Flowering when it fell into desuetude elsewhere.

Tissington Hall, a fine old Elizabethan mansion facing the church, has been associated for four centuries with the Fitzherberts, one of whom figured in a very popular eighteenth-century romance, *The Spiritual Quixote.* This was written at Tissington about 1745, when the author, the Rev. Richard Graves, stayed for three years at the hall as chaplain to the reigning Fitzherbert, who is described in the novel under the character of Sir William Forester, "a gentleman of fine sense, and, what is not always a consequence, of fine taste, not only in the polite arts, music, painting, architecture, and the like, but in life and manners. He had the art of making every company happy, and the greater art of making himself happy in every company." As for Mrs. Fitzherbert, or Lady Forester, "the utmost indiscretion which the severest critic could ever charge her with was of a romantic kind, the rambling once or twice into Hyde Park at a distance from her equipage and attendants, and reading under a tree, accompanied only by a female friend, with all the security of rural innocence. Her ladyship was a little inclined to the mystic or the seraphic theology, being a great admirer of Fénélon's and other works of the same kind." Evidently the Fitzherberts were people of sentiment, with all that favourite phrase implied. They numbered among their friends Dr. Johnson, who, says Boswell, had in general a very high opinion of Mrs. Fitzherbert's understanding. Fitzherbert himself sat in the House of Commons and, when in London, moved in the best and wittiest society. It was at his house that Johnson first met Foote, the comedian, who was also a partner in a small-beer brewery, and got his friends to buy from him, Fitzherbert among the number. The beer was so bad that Fitzherbert's servants vowed they would not drink it. Instead of giving notice, as their high and mighty descendants of the present day would do, they were, says Boswell, "at some loss how to notify their resolution, being

afraid of offending their master, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At last they fixed upon a little black boy, who was rather a favourite, to be their deputy and deliver their remonstrance; and having invested him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr. Fitzherbert in all their names, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's



Tissington Hall.

small beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzherbert's, and the boy served at table: he was so delighted with Foote's stories and merriment and grimace that when he went downstairs he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small beer.'" Never did an actor receive a finer tribute to his powers.

As for Fitzherbert himself, Johnson said, "There was no sparkle, no brilliancy in Fitzherbert, but I never knew a man

who was so generally acceptable. He made everybody quite easy, overpowered nobody by the superiority of his talents, made no man think worse of him by being his rival, seemed always to listen, did not oblige you to hear much from him, and did not oppose what you said. Everybody liked him, but he had no friend, as I understand the word, nobody with whom he exchanged intimate thoughts. People were willing to think well of everything about him." This is the portrait of a pleasant-mannered, courteous gentleman with literary tastes, of only second or third rate talent himself, but the acceptable companion of genius, fashion, and wit. His end was tragic, for in 1772 he committed suicide, owing, it is said, to pecuniary embarrassments. The Fitzherbert baronetcy dates from 1783, the first baronet, Sir William, having been raised to that dignity by George III. in reward for his services as Gentleman Usher. But the clever member of the family was his younger brother, Alleyne Fitzherbert. He, after a highly successful career as a diplomatist, notably at St. Petersburg, at the courts of Catherine and Alexander I., was raised to the peerage as Baron St. Helens, a title which became extinct at his death.

We have wandered far away from *The Spiritual Quixote*, which started us off on this digression. Let us return to it for a moment. Graves wrote it in imitation of Cervantes' romance, and sought to kill two birds with one stone. He wished to write an amusing book, and also, as a Church of England parson, he wished to pour ridicule on Methodism. So he gave his crack-brained hero who is fired with the notion of converting his fellow-countrymen—the name of Wildgoose, and, with Tugwell for his Sancho Panza, he brought him up from the south of England to the hills of Derbyshire. They reach Ashbourne, which is described as "a great thoroughfare to Buxton Wells, to the High Peak, and many parts of the north, and being inhabited by many substantial people concerned in the mines, and having three or four of the greatest horse-fairs in that part of England every year, is a populous town."

There Wildgoose is led into a violent altercation with a quack doctor named Stubbs, who, on getting the worst of the argument, turns the tables on his antagonist by denouncing him as a Jesuit in disguise. A tumult arises and Wildgoose is thrown into the local lock-up, where he endures much privation before he succeeds in establishing his innocence. Then he and Tugwell set out on the Buxton road, and, after travelling about an hour and a half, reach what they had taken to be the summit of the mountains, only to discover, to their dismay, a succession of higher hills beyond. Finally, they meet the Foresters picnicking in the valley, and Wildgoose is invited to join their party at Tissington, where he spends a few days in sight-seeing, visits Ilam Hall, "the seat of Mr. Porte," and sees the "Wonders of the Peak."

CHAPTER IX

ARBORLOW AND MONYASH

About six miles from Tissington, where the main road forks, is the Newhaven Inn, a big three-storeyed house with a large stone-pillared porch. The yard at its side once provided stabling for a hundred horses, but most of the stalls have long since been converted into cowsheds. The inn stands amid trees, in pleasant contrast with the dreary uplands all around it, and in the coaching days was perhaps the best-known hostelry in all Derbyshire. Such an inn was badly needed, for previously there had been only a few mean little houses of call between Ashbourne and Buxton, and travellers were grateful to the Duke of Devonshire for this roadside palace which he built for their comfort. It now looks ghostly and deserted—save when the horse fairs are in full swing outside—but it used to have every bedroom occupied every night, and was as gay and fashionable as a London hotel. The Newhaven Inn enjoys its licence irrespective of the whims of licensing magistrates. For George IV. once spent a night there and was so pleased with his entertainment that he granted a free and perpetual licence of his own sovereign pleasure. This, of course, is vested in the proprietor, the Duke of Devonshire.

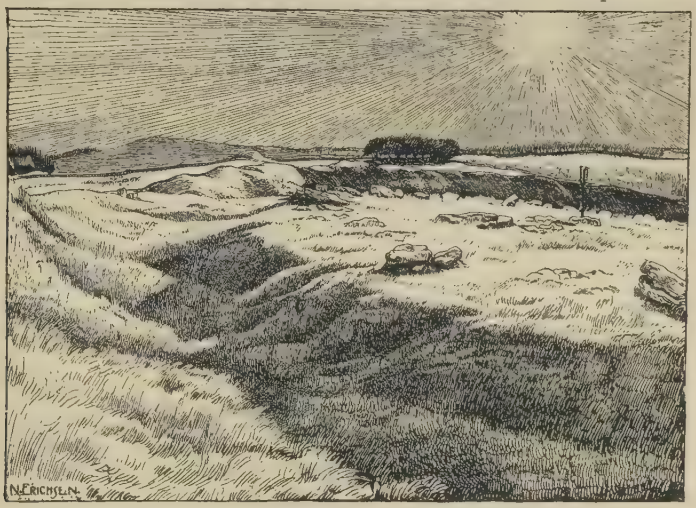
The road to the right leads down to Youlgreave and Bakewell, crossing at the far end of the plantation the third road which completes the triangle. This runs due east to Winster, passing in two miles through Pikehall, where traces are still

visible of the old Roman road from Derby to Buxton. It came from Minninglow to Pikehall, then on in a straight continuing line, crossing the Newhaven and Bakewell road at the bend below the brickworks and the High Peak railway, and then forward in another undeviating line to the south of Arborlow, still marked by a narrow belt of plantation for much of the way. From Arborlow it gradually approximated to the modern main road, joining it at the Bull-i'-th'-Thorn Inn at Hurdlow, five miles from Newhaven, and identical with it for the next mile to the Duke of York Inn, a magnificent straight stretch of white road with broad green margins. At the Duke of York it swerved to the west to pass round the slopes of Greatlow to Brierley Bar—beyond Hindlow station—and then ran straight to Sherbrook, a mile out of Buxton.

There is not much of interest from Newhaven onwards. Passing the road down to Hartington on the left, we reach the little inn which masquerades on the barren moorland under the foolish name of the Railway Inn—it had much better have kept its ancient sign of the Jug and Glass. Then, right and left, we pass a spacious green lane, once a busy channel of communication between Hartington and Youlgreave. It is a bleak country, with only a few farmsteads in sight, and on every side the thin pastures stretch away, rising here and there into "lows"—each with its tumulus where some dead chief sleeps, and a clump of trees waves over his head like some gigantic funeral plume. In a mile we cross the old High Peak mineral railway. This was the first railway in the Peak of Derbyshire, and ran from Whatstandwell, near Cromford, to Whaley Bridge, near Stockport. It was thirty-two miles and a half long, and was built as a private venture, but did not pay. It used to be worked in eight sections, some of the inclines having gradients of one in eight, up which the trucks were drawn by stationary engines. The highest point of the line is at Hurdlow. Part of the track is utilised in the North Western line from Ashbourne to Buxton and on to Whaley Bridge. In another

half-mile we approach Parsley Hay station. Just beyond it the road forks, the branch on the left leading down in two miles to Monyash. This we take, but soon turn leftwards along a by-road for half a mile, till we see on our right hand the farm in whose pastures lies the wonderful stone circle of Arborlow.

This is the principal prehistoric monument in Derbyshire, the Stonehenge of the Midlands, and almost as impressive.



Arborlow, near Monyash.

It lies on high ground—though not the highest in the neighbourhood—and commands distant views over a desolate land. Arborlow itself is a circular enclosure, 167 ft. in diameter, with a ditch 18 ft. broad surrounding it, and a vallum rising to a height of about 15 ft., and 820 ft. in circumference. In the enclosure are a number of large blocks of limestone, varying in size from 12 ft. by 7 ft. by 5 ft. to smaller stones of no more than 5 or 6 ft. long. They all lie flat on the ground forming a rude circle, and in the middle are the larger stone

blocks which probably formed the central dolmen. There are two entrances to the enclosure, a northern and a southern, and on the east side of the latter is a large detached mound. Four hundred yards west of the main enclosure is a still larger mound, known as Gib Hill, connected with it by a low rampart of earth, now nearly worn away. Such is Arborlow. But what was it? A temple or a burial-place? There is nothing to show that it was the former: there is clear evidence of the latter. Bateman, the Derbyshire "Barrow Digger," found a fine kist in Gib Hill which he took away to his museum; others have been found in the smaller mound and in the ditch and vallum. Does then Arborlow mark a battle-field? Tradition speaks of Hartington Moor as the scene of a big fight between Romans and Britons; others, detecting in the word Arborlow traces of the word Arthur, think that this, like Penrith, was one of the peerless King's battle-grounds. But imagination is not evidence, and the word holds its secret still. Nor are those guesses more convincing which connect "Arbor" with the mysterious place name "Cold Harbour"—common in almost every English county—or which tell us that Arborlow is "the hoary barrow hill," and quote Celtic derivations. They may be right—we do not know. We cannot even be sure whether the big stones always lay flat on the ground or once stood upright. A century and a half ago an old man living at Middleton said that as a boy he remembered them upright, but such evidence is of little value. All we can say is that the stones in these circles usually did stand erect. Nor, again, can we be sure of the date of Arborlow, though the balance of probability, judging from what has been found in these and neighbouring kists, is that it is considerably later than one would suppose at first sight, and not more than two thousand years old. This is all very unsatisfactory, but, after all, it is wild theorising which has brought prehistoric archæology into disrepute. It must suffice us, then, to know that Arborlow is the burial-ground of chiefs who died long ago, and

that brave men have wept here and raised memorials over their bravest

"*Reliquias veterumque vides monumenta virorum.*"

From Arborlow we may retrace our steps to the first cross-road, and then turn down to the right past Benty Grange for a long two miles to Monyash. This is not an attractive village. It lies low in a deep depression of the uplands, and one feels, on entering it, that it has seen better days. The feeble, dilapidated cross at the four cross roads is emblematic of the present condition of Monyash, though it was a market town five centuries and a half ago, and the mining capital of the High Peak, as Wirksworth was of the Low Peak. Now the wide, straggling streets look forlorn. Even the church bears witness to the general decay, for the south porch is in ruins, the interior is bare and cheerless, and the churchyard is unkempt. A huge oak chest in the church tower, ten feet long and white with age, is the most interesting thing in Monyash.

Nevertheless, we may linger here profitably a little while, for Monyash was for forty years the home of one who well deserves to be remembered among the worthies of Derbyshire. "He lived well, and so he died. And after all the toils, exercises, and buffetings he met with here in this life, in a good old age he was gathered home unto a quiet habitation." Who would not wish to know something of him of whom these simple words were written? Happily for us, John Gratton, the Quaker, kept a journal, wherein he told the story of his religious experiences and missionary work among the hills and dales of Derbyshire. He was born in 1640, probably near Chesterfield, and was the son of a small farmer. In boyhood and youth he loved worldly pleasures and recreations; for he played cards and rejoiced in "the shooting of bulls and the ringing of bells"—amusements which seemed to him after his conversion to be lacking sadly in grace. But while still young he began to be anxious about his spiritual condition.

First of all he joined the Presbyterians. After a lengthy trial, he came to the conclusion that these were not the real elect. He found their method of singing the Psalms a serious stumbling-block. Then he attended the parish church, but the formalism of the services and the set prayers offended him. Afterwards he attached himself to the Anabaptists for some years; and at last found the Truth among the Quakers. But, long before he cast in his lot with the Quakers, he had been vouchsafed a vision of "the Lord's people." Bunyan himself could not have described it more effectively:—

"It pleased the Lord to shew me his people who served Him. For, as I walked along through a dark wood and was so exercised that I scarce knew where I was, yet I kept walking on all alone, and as I came out of the wood to go up a hill out of a deep valley, I had a vision, and I saw a people laid close one by another in a very low place, lower than the other parts of the earth; where they lay still and quiet. And I looked upon them, for it arose in my heart that they were the Lord's people. This made me to look earnestly to see who they were, that I might know them to my comfort, whom the Lord owned for his people, and I saw plainly that they were the people called Quakers, a poor, despised, low sort of people: which when I perceived, I was as one amazed, and in great trouble; for these were a people above all others that endured the greatest sufferings and were by all the rest hated, reviled, and scorned.

"As I walked on the vision ended, but I was in a strange frame, and, considering the matter, I felt a change was upon me, and I knew that my countenance was altered. So I drew near a little village, my way lying through it, but I had a mind to escape being seen as much as I could, because I concluded that they would take notice that my countenance was much altered. But it fell out that when I got almost through the town there was a woman saw me and called to me, though I went as far from her as I well could to keep in the road. And she asked me how I did and what ailed me to look so—was I well? I gave her little answer, but said (as I remember), 'Not very well,' so passed on; and coming to a stile that was on the top of a high hill I sate down upon it: and there it was shewed me that, if I would be a true follower of the Lamb, I must forsake the world, its corrupt ways, passions, customs, worships, and all the vain-glory, love, and friendship of it."

Unfortunately, Gratton does not say where this extraordinary vision took place, but the year was 1664. One would

expect so rapt an enthusiast to lose no time in joining the Quakers while the impression of the vision was still fresh upon his mind. But he did not do so, for he was evidently reluctant to believe that to none but the despised Quakers had the Truth, of which he was in search, been revealed. In those days of strenuous faith and intolerable fanaticism, no sympathetic bond of union existed between those who now call themselves Free Churchmen; the Anabaptist was as hostile to the Quaker as to the Anglican, to the Presbyterian as to the Catholic. Gratton was still an Anabaptist when the Conventicle Act of 1670 was passed, which forbade more than five people assembling for purposes of worship, under penalty of fines of £20 on the owner of the house, £20 on the preacher, and five shillings on every listener. When this Act was passed there was much searching of heart among the Derbyshire Nonconformists. Some were for meeting in the open air to save the fine on the house; some advocated meeting at an early hour that the service might be over when "the priest and people came from the steeple-house to dinner"; the bolder spirits —and Gratton was one of their number—were for meeting just when and where they had done before and braving the consequences.

But in 1671, at the time of the corn-harvest, as Gratton was riding on the road to Sheldon all alone, in deep exercise, "it pleased the Lord, on a sudden, unexpectedly and unlooked for, that the Daystar arose in my heart and the Sun of Righteousness with healing under his wings." His full conversion came soon afterwards in the house of Widow Farnay, at Exton, near Matlock. Gratton was a total stranger to the Quakers assembled there for worship, and they eyed him with suspicion as a possible spy, but at the close of the meeting he publicly declared his conversion and his desire to be one of their number. "I felt," he says, "such a love in my heart to them as I had never felt to

any people. Oh! it was true love, such a love as none know but they that have it. And I also felt the same love in them to me, and some of them got me in their arms and were glad of me, though I knew but few of them, or they me." When he returned home, his "poor wife was sore grieved" to learn that he had joined the Quakers—though she too subsequently became converted—while the neighbours resented it as an insult to themselves and to public opinion. But the more they reviled him, the more he rejoiced that he had been found worthy to suffer and to be reproached for Christ's sake, and thenceforth, down to the day of his death, he made the preaching of the Truth, as he understood it, the serious occupation of his life, and his zeal was rewarded with many notable "convincements." He often met with bitter opposition, as the following experience will show:—

"And there was a convincement at Bradow and thereabouts in the Peak, and Mr. Jonathan Fisher and his wife with divers others were convinced. We appointed meetings there, but such a multitude came that the house could not contain them. Wherefore I went into the street under a great tree in the market place, that was walled about, and I got upon the top of the wall and spoke to the people, but a company of rude fellows set on to stone us, and the stones flew about my head and rattled in the tree, yet hit me not. But a woman that happened to sit near me, a great stone hit her and wounded her, and the people came and carried her into an house, but she recovered after some time. At last a man came blaming them that threw stones at us and got into the crowd, but after he had stood a while he stooped to take up a stone to fling at me, as was supposed, and one of his neighbours standing by, who had been for some time very attentive, seeing the man that had blamed others going to throw a stone, he up with his fists and struck him on the ear, that he let the stone fall and did not fling it at me. This man who struck the other was convinced that day and became an honest man, and so continued till his death for aught I know.

"At last Henry Jackson and Henry Roebuck came to the meeting and got on the top of the wall also, and, as Henry Jackson was declaring, a parcel of young lusty men came and cast off their upper coats and thrust the Friends violently off the wall. Henry Jackson was heavy, and they were very hard set to get him down, but they did. I went down and

spake to one of them, asking him why he was so uncivil. He answered, if they let us alone, the town would be Quakers."

How vividly the simple words conjure up the riotous scene! Let us take yet another instance. Gratton used to attend Wirksworth market. One day he was greatly distressed at the profane swearing of the market people, who "swore so dreadfully that it was to me as if sparks of fire had flown about," and he was bidden by the voice of the Lord to go to the market cross and declare against the wickedness of the people. Gratton was loth to obey, for, as he frankly confessed in his *Journal*, he knew the people of Wirksworth to be "a rude, wicked, swearing, drunken people," and he feared they might pull him to pieces. So he took horse and rode home to Monyash instead. But his conscience smote him sorely, and the very next time he was in Wirksworth he went boldly to the market cross and preached so powerfully that "the people were much reached and wept aloud and no man had power to hurt me, though I stopt twice and sate down and waited still for the fresh motion of Life." One sees the earnest-faced enthusiast pausing to get his breath and the startled crowd cowering under his fiery rebukes. Then, when he had finished his discourse, he went to the inn with joy in his heart. Nevertheless, a vague sense of impending danger weighed upon his mind and he speedily had his horse saddled and departed. No sooner was he safely on the road than Justice Loe came riding into Wirksworth and sent to the inn to summon Gratton before him, meaning to cast him into prison. The bird had flown.

This Justice Loe was "a great persecutor of Friends," but it is tolerably evident that the general feeling of the Derbyshire magistrates was to ignore, as far as possible, the contumacy of those who defied the Acts against Dissenters, provided there was no open scandal. Even when preachers were fined on conviction, payment was by no means always enforced. John Gratton was well known throughout Derbyshire

as an honest, if misguided, enthusiast, and so when, in 1680, he was condemned to imprisonment in Derby gaol under a writ of excommunication, his treatment was extraordinarily lenient. A prisoner who was allowed to go home for weeks together and was not even denied opportunities to hold Quaker meetings, was clearly not called upon to suffer a very grievous martyrdom, and in the end, after six years' imprisonment, the prison doors were opened for him and he was asked to go. Leaving Monyash in 1707, Gratton went to live with his daughter at Farnsfield, in Nottinghamshire, where he died in 1711. "He was a man beloved of God and of His people; sound in his testimony; courteous in behaviour. He loved the Truth for the Truth's sake; was patient in his suffering for it; faithful to God in discharging his duty to Him; helpful to His people wherein he could be serviceable to them, either in their private or public concerns." Dr. Johnson once said that in writing lapidary inscriptions a man is not to be considered on oath, but this eulogy of John Gratton, written by some of his Stockport friends, rings unmistakably true.

Monyash became a Quaker centre and only in recent years has the Society of Friends ceased to count adherents in the neighbourhood. Among the last were the Bowmans of One Ash Grange, two miles to the south-east of the village, a farm-house which had once been a penitentiary for refractory monks from Roche Abbey in Yorkshire. It also has associations with John Bright, who bestowed the name upon his house at Rochdale, which for many years of last century was one of the best known private addresses in England. John Bright's grandmother was a great granddaughter of John Gratton. There was, indeed, good reason for Dissent to be strong in Monyash and the lamentable condition of the parish church is best explained by such an incident as the following, which took place in 1742, when one of the earliest Methodists, John Benet, was preaching there. He thus relates his experience :—

"I went into the Peak to preach at Monyash, when a clergyman with a great company of men that worked in the lead mines, all being in liquor, came in just as I was about to give out the hymn. As soon as we began to sing he began to halloo and shout as if he were hunting with a pack of hounds, and so continued all the time we sang. When I began to pray, he attempted to overturn the chair I stood on, but he could not, although he struck it so violently with his feet that he broke one of the arms of the chair quite off. When I began to preach he called one of his companions to pull me down, but they replied, 'No, sir, the man says nothing but the truth; pray hold your peace and let us hear what he has to say.' He then came to me himself, and took me by the collar of the shirt and pulled me down, then he tore my coat cuffs, and attempted to tear it down the back, then took me by the collar and shook me. I said, 'Sir, you and I must shortly appear before the bar of GOD to give an account of this night's work.' He replied, 'What? must you and I appear before GOD together?' I said, 'As sure as we look each other in the face now.' He let go my throat, took my Bible out of my hand, and turning it over and over said, 'It is a right Bible, and if you preach by the spirit of God, let me hear you from this text,' which was, 'Wisdom strengtheneth the wise, more than ten mighty men in a city.' I got up and began to preach from the text, and when any offered to make a noise, the miners said, 'Hold your peace or we will make you, and let us hear what he will make of the parson's text.' As I went on the parson said, 'That is right; that is true.' After a while he looked round and saw many in tears; he then looked at me and went away, leaving me to finish my discourse in peace."

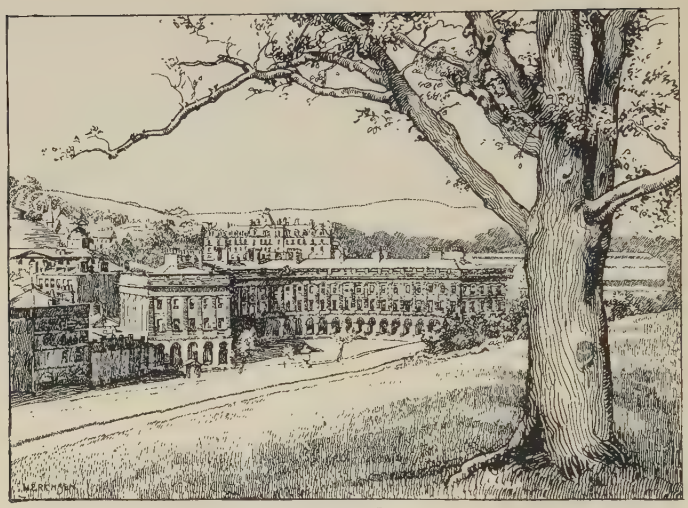
Is it strange that the church languished with such a vicar? But note the very remarkable sequel! One of the Monyash Methodists was so incensed at the vicar's conduct that he prophesied, "If that man die the common death of man I am much mistaken." And, true enough, some years later, the parson fell over a precipice one night, while under the influence of liquor, and broke his neck. So says the Rev. John Benet, and the vicar can surely be none other than the Rev. Robert Lomas, whose tragic death is commemorated by the name of Parson's Tor, given to the rock over which he fell, at the Monyash entrance to Lathkill Dale. The tuft of grass, which was found clenched in the dead man's hand, was preserved for many years in a bottle. He died in 1776, thirty-four years after the prophecy.

We need not linger over the road between Monyash and Buxton. I had intended to take the cross-country track to Flagg Hall and thence to Chelmorton, but a careless turning on the desolate common brought me out on the Ashbourne road again by the Bull-i'-th'-Thorn Inn. I did not regret my error. The straight mile along the Roman road to Street House—the name proclaims aloud that it stands on a Roman way—and the Duke of York Inn was exhilarating walking, and a little beyond the inn I turned by footpath and cartroad over the slope of Nether Low to the cross roads below Chelmorton. As I topped the hill I left the dreary uplands behind me and welcomed the indications of richer land. Chelmorton is an ancient village pleasantly perched on the slope of a green hill, with a church which boasts itself to be the highest in England and to have been built in 1111. The first claim is untenable: the second has no other evidence than four casual strokes on a beam.

From the cross roads we may turn leftwards for a mile till we reach on the right hand the entrance to a curious dry ravine in the limestone. This is Horseshoe Dale, and the footpath which runs down it is the Priest's Way, an ancient bridle path belonging to the days when the road we have just left was still uncut. Half a mile down this broad grassy ravine, which in places looks like a deep railway cutting, a second ravine, Back Dale, enters on the left, and the two go forward to the valley of the Wye under the name of Deep Dale—an imposing and dignified dale, with rugged limestone rocks on either side. Deep Dale, from where we stand to Topley Pike, is two miles in length, and its exploration involves some rather rough walking at the further end. Its chief distinction is the cavern which used to be called Thirst House, or Hob's Thirst House. Hob, of course, is the old name for a mischievous elf or pixie, and Thirst is said to be a corruption of The Hurst, meaning a wood or forest. The Dale was, until recently, believed to be a favourite haunt of "the little people," nor is it

long since a villager gravely assured a Buxton antiquary that, while passing through it, he had caught one of these fairies and put it into his bag, until it "skriked so" that he let it go. Thanks to the well-directed labours of Mr. Micah Salt, the antiquary in question, the Deep Dale Cavern, as it is now generally called, was carefully explored a few years ago, and the cave earth yielded very rich finds. The most important of these were relics of the Roman occupation in the shape of coins, fibulæ, and other silver articles for the toilet, and fragments of pottery which tended to show that these were relics not of the closing but of the early years of the Roman occupation; relics, that is to say, not of the fourth but of the first or second century.

The Priest's Way leaves the ravine at the entrance to Deep Dale, and climbing up the left bank passes out through the fields into a by-road before we reach the church. Then a path leads off on the left hand through a pleasantly wooded estate, and enters the main road from Buxton to Bakewell just opposite Pig Tor. Buxton lies two miles to the left down Ashwood Dale, a fine gorge of the infant Wye, with noble crags and glorious trees, but irreparably spoilt by industrialism. The railway embankment is hideously present all the way; there are odious limekilns on a gigantic scale, and even the poor little stream is made in places to run—like a sewer—in a narrow concrete channel. Ashwood Dale can never be anything but beautiful, but the old charm has gone. A mile from Buxton is the Lover's Leap, a pretty dell on the left hand down over the face of whose rock a little brook comes cascading after rain. It is a pretty bit entirely after the heart of the Early Victorian young lady with a sketch book. Just beyond, the Duke's Drive enters the main road and forms a fitting introduction to the fashionable watering place of Buxton.



The Crescent, Buxton.

CHAPTER X

BUXTON

Buxton's fame as a watering place is known throughout the land. Only to Bath has it ever yielded precedence—Harrogate and Tunbridge Wells and Cheltenham are of recent growth compared with it. As Drayton sang,

> "That most delicious fount,
> Which men the second Bath of England do account."

For Buxton, like Bath, claims to have been a watering place in the days of the Roman occupation. Its pretensions, it is true, are often stated in extravagant terms, and the suggestion that Buxton was ever a populous place of resort with the wealthy Romans of Britain has no evidence to support it. It lay either on or near the line of the Roman Road, which we saw on the high ground above Hartington and Hurdlow, and in the level ground of the Silverlands, on the east side of the town, local antiquaries have found indisputable traces of Roman road and Roman residences. Among them is a fragment of a

milestone, which records the fact that Anavio or Brough was ten miles distant, along the Bathamgate. Buxton, beyond reasonable doubt, is the Aquis of the Ravennas geographer, who placed a Roman station of that name somewhere in the middle of England next to Nanione—that being clearly a mis-spelling of Anavio. It would have been strange, indeed, if, with the bath-loving Romans in the neighbourhood, the warm springs of Buxton had remained undiscovered, and one is not surprised, therefore, to hear that fragments of an ancient Roman brick wall, cemented with red plaster, were found near St. Anne's Well at the beginning of the eighteenth century, while workmen were digging the foundations for an ornamental arch which a Cheshire knight, Sir Thomas Delves, set up in thanks for his recovery. Some years before portions of what was reputed to be a Roman lead cistern had also been brought to light. These are conclusive evidences that the Romans knew the curative properties of St. Anne's Well: they do not prove that Buxton was in any sense "a place of resort." Indeed, beyond the soldiers of the road stations, there can hardly have been any Romans in Derbyshire—a country which would have absolutely no charms to the Roman eye. The official who had the ill fortune to be stationed on the borders of the High Peak was, we may be certain, very sorry for himself as having to endure hateful exile amid barbarian surroundings. Buxton cannot have been in any sense of the term a counterpart of the Aquæ Solis of the West of England.

For a dozen centuries Buxton scarcely finds mention in English history. It figures as Bawkestanes in the Doomsday survey, but we refuse to be led into dogmatic utterance on the derivation of the word. Any one may choose for himself, and the choice is wide. Some see in Buxton merely Buck-stone; others Buck's-ton, the enclosure of the buck. Others invent a bastard Latin word Bucostenum; others talk of Bockstein; others, in sublimer faith, fall back on "bucking-stones," the place where women took their clothes to wash. Some of these derivations are merely fantastic—but which, we will not say.

However, when we reach Tudor times we find that the Well of Saint Anne was a kind of Lourdes where people went to be cured, with greater faith in the healing power of the Saint than in the curative powers of the waters, and where those who obtained relief hung up their crutches and sticks as witnesses to the virtues of the place. A harmless enough custom, surely, handed down from immemorial Pagan times, but, therefore, most offensive to the inconoclast agents whom my Lord Cromwell sent up and down the land to work the will of King Henry the Eighth. Sir William Bassett came to Buxton, defaced the tabernacles, tore down the votive crutches, and "locked up and sealed the baths and wells of Buckston that none shall enter to wash there till your Lordship's pleasure be further known."

Nevertheless, by Queen Elizabeth's time the baths and wells were unsealed again and the reputation of the water stood high. So Dr. Jones, writing the first of countless treaties upon the benefit of the Buxton waters, tells us in 1572 that "joining to the chief spring, between the river and the bath, is a very goodly house, four-square, four stories high, so well compact with houses and offices underneath and above and round about, with a great chamber and other goodly lodgings to the number of thirty, that it is and will be a beauty to behold and very notable for the right honourable and worshipful that shall need to repair thither, as also for others, yea, and the poor shall have lodgings and beds hard by for their uses only. The baths also are beautified with seats round about, and defended from the ambient air, and chimneys for fire to air your garments in the bath side, and other necessaries most decent." This "very goodly house" was, of course, the residence of the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury, and it was here that their charge, Mary Queen of Scots, spent five weeks on her first visit to Buxton in 1573. She was there again in 1574, 1576, 1579, 1580 and 1583, and possibly in other years when she spent part of the summer at Chatsworth. The Queen went to Buxton to obtain relief from her ailments, and wrote, after her first visit, "I have not been at all disappointed, thank God."

When Elizabeth heard that her captive liked Buxton and was anxious to go again, she promptly suspected that there must be some ulterior motive. Hence Queen Mary's vehement protests to M. de la Mothe, "I protest before God that I have in this no other object than my health." Elizabeth accepted these assurances, but did not relax her precautions. In fact, she redoubled them. Buxton was an exposed place; she was afraid some wild plan of escape over the hills and moors might present itself to Queen Mary, and Lord Burghley seems to have gone down to Buxton in 1577, in order to satisfy himself that it was a safe residence for a prisoner. In 1580, when there was another scare in Queen Elizabeth's circle, Shrewsbury wrote to assure them all that whenever Queen Mary was in Buxton no strangers were allowed to come near the place. Even the beggars were driven off, and not one of the Queen's retinue—always much reduced at Buxton—was permitted to leave the house without a guard. "I have not suffered the simplest of them," wrote the Earl, "for these seven years to walk abroad or stir out of doors without a guard." Doubtless they slipped out occasionally, and, despite all Shrewsbury's precautions, Queen Mary always contrived to conduct a variety of intrigues and keep up a regular correspondence with her friends outside. She was at Buxton for the last time in the July of 1584, and tradition says that she wrote with a diamond on a pane of glass the following couplet of farewell:—

"*Buxtona, quæ calidæ celebrubere nomine lymphæ,*
Forte mihi posthac non adeunda vale."

Nor are you allowed even now to get far out of sound or sight of these lines all the time you are in Buxton. Lord Burghley we may note, did not make a long stay, but he gave the waters a thorough trial. "I came hither," he writes, "on Sunday last at night, and took a small solutive on Monday. Yesterday I drank of the water to the quantity of three pints at six draughts. This day I have added two draughts and I drank four pints, and to-morrow am I determined to drink five

pints. Mixt with sugar I find it potable with pleasure, even as whey." That is qualified praise—save to a Scot.

Hobbes, the philosopher, was in Buxton in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and has left on record in his *jeu d'esprit* in Latin hexameters, *De Mirabilibus Pecci*, a curious account of the few hours which he spent there. It was twilight when he and his companion rode into the town after a long tiring day of sight-seeing. But let Hobbes speak for himself in our translation of his verses :—

"Buxton we reach renowned for her tepid waves, where is the famous fountain sacred to St. Anne. The ministering earth mingles there her waters, both hot and cold, and pours forth healing virtues from sulphurous veins. These strengthen the weakened limbs of tottering age, and refresh the stiffened joints of those who bathe within the stream. Hither come the lame, guiding with a staff their trembling steps, and depart with staff thrown thanklessly aside. Hither comes the unfruitful dame, whose longing is to be a mother, and leaves fruitful, methinks, even though her husband stay at home.

"As it rises, the sparkling wave is caught in its square fountain, and, five feet in depth, supports the swimmer. A wall screens it from the eyes of the curious : a roof protects it from the rain. A joint wall with open doors connects this delightful bath with our inn, and so, while dinner is being cooked at a fire of turf, we are minded to refresh our tired limbs in the tepid waters. Stripped to the skin, we glide along the gleaming waves and veil our naked bodies in the transparent stream. Now face downwards we swim ; now on our back we snuff the waters and drink them too—for we cannot all do all things. Then, having spent a full hour in disporting ourselves thus, we emerge dripping and wrap dry towels round us ; nor is it long before each is clad in his own clothes again and dinner awaits us on a well-laden board.

"Meanwhile black night flies out from all her caves at once and enfolds the whole scene in dark, irresistible shadows. Lamps are lit and the meal is brought in. Now there is set before us, according to our order, not whole baths, but just a small portion of mutton broth, with the meat itself withdrawn and set apart. Then comes a loin of the self-same sheep smoking from the spit, a chicken that had but lately burst its shell, and many a good spoonful of buttered peas. After vainly calling for rich cups of wine, we drain black flagons of smiling beer, and then, our meal completed, woo sleep with draughts of tobacco smoke. And, ere yet Aurora, heralding the triumph of Phœbus, has driven from the sky the common herd of stars, we rouse ourselves from slumber, plunge yet again into the waves, and let the healing waters permeate us through and through. Then, twice-dipped, we

bear back to our couches our dripping bodies and rise from sleep at nine o'clock."

We have given the passage at length because of its details. Probably the rising from sleep in the middle of the night, in order to have a second bath, was merely a fad of Hobbes, for he had odd theories about the best means of preserving health, and we need not suppose that this formed part of the Buxton treatment in the seventeenth century. The passage is important also as showing that the bath was roofed in Hobbes's day and formed part of the inn where he lodged. Nor did the philosopher fare so badly with a dinner of mutton broth, loin of mutton, and chicken with buttered peas, and this, we fancy, is a truer picture of the Buxton fare of the period than that given by Macaulay in his chapter on "The State of England in 1685," where he uttered the famous libel, which has wrung the withers of every good Buxtonian. "The gentry of Derbyshire," he wrote, "and of the neighbouring counties repaired to Buxton, where they were lodged in low rooms under bare rafters, and regaled with oatcake and with a viand which the hosts called mutton, but which the guests suspected to be dog. A single good house stood near the spring." "The single good house" was, of course, that of the Earl of Devonshire, where Queen Mary had been a prisoner; the authority for Macaulay's libel on the Buxton dietary is a curious passage in a short but sprightly account of a tour in Derbyshire, written in 1662 by Thomas Browne, son of Sir Thomas Browne of Norwich, the author of *Religio Medici*. He says of Buxton —where he notes that "the better sort of people wore shoes on Sundays and some of them bands"—that he and his brother were lodged in "a low rafty room" and that their "entertainment was oat cakes and mutton, which we fancied to taste like dog." Perhaps their host did not greatly put himself out—it was during the slack season—to provide dainty dishes for two wandering schoolboys. But they have had a lively revenge.

In 1670 the Earl of Devonshire pulled down the ancient hall where Queen Mary had stayed and built the present Old

Hall. Charles Cotton, in his *Wonders of the Peak*, writes enthusiastically of it :—

> "Buxton's in beauty famous, but in this
> Much more, the pilgrim never frustrate is
> That comes to bright St. Anne, when he can get
> Nought but his pains from yellow Somerset.
>
> Nor is our Saint, though sweetly humble, shut
> Within coarse walls of an indecent hut,
> But in the centre of a Palace springs,
> A mansion proud enough for Saxon Kings,
> But by a lady built, who rich and wise
> Not only houses raised but families."

Then he goes on to say that Bess of Hardwick's old mansion had been lately repaired. It had, indeed, been doubled in size, for it could now accommodate sixty ladies and gentlemen instead of thirty, with rooms also for their servants. The grounds were famous. A bowling green lay in front of the hall, groves of trees on the north side, and the gardens proper were at the back.

Cotton, of course, had a good deal to say of St. Anne's Well, and said it with wholesome exaggeration in very mediocre verse. A few lines will suffice, those in which he describes the twin springs of St. Anne, the hot and the cold :—

> "This tepid fountain a twin sister has
> Of the same beauty and complexion,
> That bubbling six feet off joins both in one,
> But yet so cold withal that who will stride,
> When bathing, cross the bath but half so wide,
> Shall in one body, which is strange, endure
> At once an ague and a calenture."

This would have been strange indeed had it been true, which it certainly was not. Cotton's cousin, Sir Aston Cokayne—a tedious versifier—had not drawn such a long bow :—

> "At Buxton in the Peak nine springs break out
> Within a little compass, wondrous thought,
> Because that eight of them are warm and one
> As if it were under the frigid zone."

At the end of the seventeenth century we get a glimpse of

Buxton in the diary of William Fiennes—published in recent years under the title of *Through England on a Side Saddle*—where the writer complains of the accommodation at the Old Hall. The charges were described as unreasonable and the lodgings bad, two, three and four beds being crowded into a room and the visitors often compelled to lie three in a bed. More interesting still is the account of *A Journey to Edenborough* made in 1705 by a certain Mr. Joseph Taylor, who was accompanied by two friends, named Harrison and Sloman. Their route lay through Loughborough, Derby, Brassington, Buxton, Castleton, Chatsworth and Chesterfield, and so north. They had a dreadful ride from Brassington to Buxton—evidently over Minning Low and Pikehall into the Ashbourne Road near Newhaven—and they describe Buxton as "a poor, stony little town." However, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, as the following extract will show:—

"Here we met with a young lady, in company with her father and mother, whose conversation made the place very agreeable. She justly merited from us the name of the fair Gloriana, which we found accidentally engraven on the wall of the Bath, whilst we were disputing what Angelicall title we should give her. 'T is impossible to describe how merry we were and with what pleasure we bathed, which was so much the greater because we never expected such heavenly enjoyments in so desolate a country. This sufficiently convinced me that good company makes all places diverting."

Evidently they made a very jolly party, bent on having a good time, and succeeding in getting it. Unfortunately, the diarist does not describe the Bath—he is too busy thinking of his Gloriana—but he transcribes a copy of Latin verses which he found written on the wall, "imperfect," he says, "through some mistakes in the original." They are not only imperfect, but hopelessly corrupt.

Even in the middle of the eighteenth century the bathing arrangements at Buxton remained decidedly primitive. In 1735 the bath is described as being situated in an arched room, ten yards long and five and a half yards wide and high, and there was no more than a stone bench at which the bather

might dress and undress. A few steps led down into the bath, which was paved with smooth flag stones, and its temperature was estimated as "a quart of boiled water mixed with a gallon of cold." Visitors, however, were not exacting in their demands in those days, for one of them speaks of the bath as "handsome, convenient, and delightful," and admires its capacity to "receive twenty people at a time to walk or swim in its tepid waters." In 1765, when Dr. Alexander Hunter wrote a pamphlet on the Buxton Waters, the drinking well was still exposed to the open air, and thus, as the author says, "every time the well-woman fills her glass the waters are inevitably agitated and the volatile spirit, instead of being carefully retained, is in some degree dissipated." A pump, he added, would be an easy remedy for this inconvenience. The best time for bathing was then considered to be about an hour before breakfast; for drinking, three pints were deemed an average daily allowance, and it was thought advisable to drink the water for a few days before bathing. The first effects are described as "a sort of inebriating giddiness attended with a sense of universal fulness and drowsiness, but these wore off with use and were seldom perceived afterwards."

Modern Buxton dates from 1780, when its famous Crescent was built at the expense of the fifth Duke of Devonshire out of his revenues from the Ecton copper mines near Alstonefield. It was evidently the Duke's ambition that Buxton—his Buxton—should rival Bath, and hence the Crescent, designed by Carr of York, on the model of James Wood's Crescent at Bath. This was two hundred feet in length, or, if the later wings are reckoned, more than a hundred yards, and was built of stone quarried on the spot and faced with freestone from another quarry, a mile and a half out on the Disley Road. A contemporary account describes the Crescent as consisting of "three stories, the lowest rustic, forming a beautiful arcade or piazza as a shelter from the sun and heat, within which are shops. Ionic pilasters form the divisions between the windows above and support an elegant balustrade that surmounts the

front." At the rear were the Duke's stables, with stalls for a hundred and ten riding horses and a large exercising ground in the centre, where, in wet weather, visitors could ride under cover. The Crescent became the hub of Buxton's life and gaiety, and the £120,000 which the Duke is said to have laid out, must have proved a very remunerative investment. The Crescent lies in a hollow which rather detracts from its appearance, this being due to the obstinacy of a local landowner who refused to sell to the Duke a certain strip of land which was required to place the Crescent on a more advantageous site.

The baths were also greatly improved about the same time, and when Dr. Joseph Denman described them in 1801, several new ones had been opened. The principal bath (27 ft. by 12 ft. 8 ins.) was enclosed in a handsome arched room (30 ft. by 17 ft.). Lined and paved with polished grit-stone, it was 4 ft. 10 ins. in depth, but its size was afterwards diminished by a reservoir (7 ft. 6 ins. by 4 ft. 6 ins.) being taken out of it in order to supply the other baths of the establishment, viz. two small ladies' baths and a private gentlemen's bath, 10 ft. 6 ins. by 6 ft., oval in shape and lined with grey marble. There was a fifth bath called the Matlock, also supplied from the reservoir, and a sixth where the water was cold. The Poor Man's Bath, eight feet square, was filled from the large bath, and one or two private baths in other parts of the town were kept by doctors for the use of their patients. At this time the charge for a public bath was a shilling, and for a private bath three shillings. Those who stayed at "the Duke's Inns," *i.e.* the three principal hotels in the Crescent, had the special privilege of being allowed to bathe before nine o'clock, and considering the small—to our way of thinking—size of the baths, that must have been a very desirable privilege. The waters were drunk at the baths and also at St. Anne's Well, just opposite the Crescent, where the Pump Room now stands. The rising ground in front of the Crescent was laid out

in terraces and walks by Sir Jeffrey Wyatville, the architect of the sixth Duke of Devonshire.

Buxton was well equipped with hotels. According to Hutchinson, writing in 1809, the Crescent itself contained the Grand Hotel, the Centre, and the St. Anne's; at the south end of the Crescent was the Old Hall, and elsewhere in the town were the George, the Grove, the Angel, the Shakespeare, the Eagle, and the White Hart, besides many boarding houses, providing accommodation for about seven hundred visitors in all. Prices were cheap, judging from a tariff which the Rev. R. Warner drew up in 1802. During the season, which ran from May to October, the cost of a single bedroom was was only half-a-guinea a week, a double bedroom was fourteen shillings, and a sitting room from fourteen to sixteen shillings. Breakfast cost eighteenpence, dinner at the ordinary half-a-crown, tea a shilling, and supper eighteenpence. These charges seem reasonable enough, though a visitor named MacRitchie, who was in Buxton in 1795, declares that "provisions were very high and living expensive." But then MacRitchie was a Scotch minister from Aberdeenshire! It was in the middle of July when he stayed in the town, and he notes that more visitors were expected when Parliament rose, though "this watering-place has not been so much frequented since the war as formerly."

Lord Denman's description of Buxton, as he found it in 1820, from the fragment of an unpublished diary to which we have already referred, is worth quoting in full. He joined the Sheffield coach to Buxton at Stony Middleton one day in August, and says:—

"The morning was not clear, but it seemed to promise well and I rode on the coach-box. I had forgotten that Buxton is seated, in the language of Macpherson, among 'hills of storms,' and that rain is severely felt there if it be but threatened in other places. Indeed, the shower became heavier as we advanced, and I was glad to put myself within the coach with four gentlemen who, being strangers to Derbyshire, expressed their astonishment at the boldness of its hills, their censure of its uncultivated fields, and their disgust at its perpetual rain. One said that in this country there are nine

months of winter and three of cold weather; another observing the lead mines, thought that there was a better livelihood in the bowels of the earth than on its surface. However anxious to defend it, I had little to say in favour of the country through which we were doomed to pass. It rained incessantly, and on quitting Middleton Dale we saw nothing but the common lately inclosed by stone hedges, in general much neglected, but covered in some places by scanty crops of hay, unworthy of the trouble of being mown, and where mown, rotting in the wet. None of the peculiar character of the country was to be seen, neither the savage grandeur of the mountain nor the diversified fertility of the sheltered vale.

"Yet the hills were so steep and frequent that we were three hours in performing a journey of twelve miles. At my arrival and during my stay the rain fell continually, for Buxton stands at the bottom of very high hills, on which the clouds repose or below which they move slowly along. The town has very few houses, except those built for the accommodation of the company. The Crescent is a very splendid building of freestone, the two extremities of which are large and excellent hotels, and the intermediate houses are held by shopkeepers, who deal in such goods as are most in request at watering-places—novels, laces, drugs, &c.—and who let lodgings to the company. At the bottom there is a sort of cloister or covered walk, than which no contrivance can be more proper and which is continued as far as the baths. For the gentlemen there are two baths, one of considerable extent and very warm, but filling the room with a vapour much warmer than the water. The gentlemen have no objection to bathing all at once, and if the light were not in a great measure excluded the resemblance of the water to a rich broth might be seen as well as perceived by the olfactory nerves. The other is called a private bath because there is a room belonging to it, and perhaps still more because the use of it costs three shillings. It is, I think, about nine feet long and five broad, and perhaps five and a half deep. It is rather less warm than the other; this may be owing to the smaller number of bathers. The ladies, I should suppose, have equal advantages. But it ought to be mentioned that as soon as I left the water a little boy came in, with a dirty towel, offering to wipe my back. All the other buildings at Buxton are neat and kept in good order; their appearance is very good, for they are all built of stone. But none among them is, in my opinion, so elegant as the stables standing behind the Crescent, on a higher spot of ground. On Friday there was a ball which began about half-past seven and ended at nine; the room is very handsome. On Saturday a play was performed, but I did not even see the theatre. On Sunday, prayers and a sermon were read, as usual, at the Assembly Room.

During the daytime Buxton visitors used to indulge in the gentle exercise of promenading or the more violent

exercise of riding, and they formed what Hutchinson calls "pleasant parties" and went out to view the country round. The same authority tells us that there was generally a tolerable company of comedians to be found at the theatre —"the facetious and eccentric Mr. Ryley" was the manager in 1808—with performances on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays the company used to gather at the Grand Assembly Room in the Crescent, a spacious apartment—75 ft. long by 30 ft. wide and 36 ft. high —lighted by small semicircular windows which could not be seen from the floor of the room, as they were hidden by the projecting cornices. The subscription to the Assembly Room was six shillings for a single night, or a guinea for the season, with reduction for members of the same family. The dress balls took place on Wednesdays, the undress balls on Wednesdays and Fridays, and dancing ceased at the salutary hour of eleven p.m. There were also "billiard-rooms innumerable," a newsroom at the Great Hotel—for which the subscription for the season was six shillings—Moore's newsroom, and two circulating libraries, where plenty of indifferent novels were always to be obtained.

Nor should we omit the never-failing amusement of watching the arrival and departure of the coaches. Buxton was well served in this respect. In 1790, long before the coaching system and the highroads reached the zenith of their glory, Buxton was connected with Manchester and London by a coach which ran south every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and returned on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. It did not cover the entire distance, for it went no further than Leicester, where passengers were transferred to another coaching system. Nor, curiously enough, did the coach pull up at the same inn at Buxton on its coming and going. Passengers going south breakfasted at the White Hart at ten; those going north dined at the Eagle and Child (now the Devonshire) at two in the afternoon, and were in Manchester the same night. The fare by this coach from Man-

chester to London was two guineas inside and one guinea outside. Daily communication between Manchester and Buxton was secured by means of a second coach, which made the journeys on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, returning the same evening; and there was also an alternate day service between Buxton and Sheffield. By 1809 the Sheffield service had become a daily one. Those who desired cheaper travel went by the waggon-service which served as the general carriers. Pickford's London waggon passed through Buxton on Wednesdays and Fridays, and Basses' on Wednesdays and Saturdays; this connected with another service at Ashbourne, and returned on Mondays and Thursdays. Shallcross' waggon ran to Derby on Saturdays, and returned through Buxton on Wednesdays; Knowles' from Manchester to Nottingham went through Buxton on a Saturday, and was back again on the following Friday; Wild and Fidler's cart went to Macclesfield on Mondays and Fridays, and returned the same evenings; and Swindel's cart went to Sheffield every Tuesday. As for the post, the north mail came in every morning at 10 a.m. and left at 2 p.m. It met the mail coach at Macclesfield and Congleton, and arrived in Liverpool and Manchester the same night. The south mail came in every night at 10 p.m. and left at midnight, passing through Tideswell, Bakewell, Matlock, and Wirksworth, meeting the mail coach at Derby, and arriving in London the same night.

Buxton indeed had to depend on coaches until little more than half a century ago, when the Midland railway was extended from Ambergate to Buxton through Miller's Dale. In 1845, for example, heavy goods were sent by the High Peak Mineral Railway, but passengers used the coach between Manchester and Derby which passed through each way about one o'clock. That carried the mails; another coach, the Peak Guide, started at Buxton at eight in the morning and ran to Ambergate—on the North Midland system—through Bakewell and Matlock. There were also daily coaches to Sheffield through Bakewell, and a coach, called the Champion, ran through Bakewell, Matlock,

one through Miller's Dale was made, says, "All before us appeared the most forlorn nakedness, and, had we not observed some marks of human industry in the stone divisions of the fields, we should have conceived that the country round was one wide expanse of hopeless sterility. But land lets here for ten shillings an acre, and might be made more valuable if the system of husbandry, which is that of paring and burning, had not a direct tendency to make the miserable soil still more wretched and unproductive." Most scathing of all is the denunciation from the pen of Prebendary Gilpin, who says that Buxton "lies in a bottom in this uncomfortable country, surrounded with dreary barren hills and steaming on every side with offensive limekilns. Nothing but absolute want of health could make a man endure a scene so wholly disgusting." One fancies the Prebend must have been a little out of temper when he wrote that sentence, though, as we pointed out in an earlier chapter, opinion in the matter of the picturesque has undergone a complete change, and Gilpin's verdict, we fancy, was that of the average man of taste of his time. Even the Sheffield poet Montgomery thought it incumbent upon him to preface his poem *The Peak Mountains*, which he wrote in 1812, with the following remarks on the scenery of Buxton:—"When surveyed," he says, "from any of the surrounding eminences, it consists chiefly of numerous and naked hills, of which many are yet unenclosed and the rest poorly cultivated, the whole district, except in the immediate precincts of the baths and the village of Fairfield, being miserably bare of both trees and houses." The poem reflects the sense of barren desolation which the prospect impressed upon the mind of the author:—

> "Above, beneath, immensely spread,
> Valleys and hoary rocks I view;
> Heights over heights exalt their head
> Of many a sombre hue;
> No waving woods their flanks adorn,
> No hedgerows gay with trees

Encircle fields, where floods of corn
Roll to the breeze.

" My soul this vast horizon fills,
Within whose undulated line
Thick stand the multitude of hills
And clear the waters shine :
Grey mossy walls the slopes ascend,
While roads that tire the eye
Upward their winding course extend
And touch the sky.

" With rude diversity of form
The insulated mountains tower ;
Oft o'er these cliffs the transient storm
And partial darkness lower ;
While yonder summits far away
Shine sweetly through the gloom,
Like glimpses of eternal day
Beyond the tomb."

This cannot be called a cheerful poem. It suggests an author shivering on the hillside in a cold wind, and conjuring up reluctant rhymes. But James Montgomery made a better Radical editor than poet. Erasmus Darwin, however, has some sprightly lines on Buxton in his quaintly-named *Botanic Garden : Economy of Vegetation*, which are well worth quoting. They start off with the inevitable simile—Wordsworth used to call Darwin's poetry the "So-So Poetry" because his similes usually began with "So" :

" So in green vales amid her mountains bleak
Buxtonia smiles, the Goddess Nymph of Peak ;
Deep in warm waves and pebbly baths she dwells,
And calls Hygeia to her sainted wells."

Then follows an amusing and idyllic picture of the way in which lady visitors to Buxton pay their court to Buxtonia and Hygeia by roaming about the hills and taking the baths :—

" Hither in sportive bands bright Devon leads
Graces and Loves from Chatsworth's flowery meads ;
Charmed, round the Nymph, they climb the rifted rocks
And steep in mountain mist their golden locks,

On venturous step her sparry caves explore
And light with radiant eyes her realm of ore.
Oft by her bubbling founts and shadowy domes,
In gay undress the fairy legion roams,
Their dripping palms in playful malice fill
Or taste with ruby lips the sparkling rill;
Crowd round her baths, and, bending o'er the side,
Unclasped their sandals and their zones untied,
Dip with gay fear the shuddering foot undressed,
And quick retract it to the fringèd vest;
Or cleave with brandished arms the lucid stream,
And sob, their blue eyes twinkling in the steam.
High o'er the chequered vault with transient glow
Bright lustres dart as dash the waves below;
And Echo's sweet responsive voice prolongs
The dulcet tumult of their silver tongues—
O'er their flushed cheeks uncurling tresses flow,
And dewdrops glitter on their necks of snow;
Round each fair Nymph her drooping mantle clings,
And Loves emerging shake their showery wings."

Yet a few couplets more—those in which Darwin pays his tribute to the Duke of Devonshire who had so ducally lavished a hundred and twenty thousand pounds upon "elegant" Buxton improvements:—

"Here oft her Lord surveys the rude domain,
Fair arts of Greece triumphant in his train;
Lo! as he steps, the columned pile ascends,
The blue roof closes, or the crescent bends;
New woods aspiring clothe their hill with green,
Smooth slope the lawns, the grey rock peeps between;
Relenting Nature gives her hand to Taste,
And Health and Beauty crown the laughing waste."

There speaks the true eighteenth-century poet, profoundly convinced of the "rudeness" of Nature, of her lack of elegance, of her sad want of taste, and of her waiting patiently until a great Whig Peer, the Duke of Devonshire, "steps" upon the scene and puts things right as daintily as though he were dancing a minuet!

CHAPTER XI

DOVE HEAD AND HOLLINSCLOUGH : BUXTON TO CHAPEL EN-LE-FRITH

Modern Buxton need not detain us. It is a pleasant, well-built town, both in its upper and lower parts, tastefully laid out with good streets, walks, drives, and gardens, and possesses all the attractions which belong to a modern, fashionable watering place. We shall be satiated with caverns in the Castleton region, so—although it is one of the genuine Wonders of the Peak—we will say nothing of Poole's Hole. It lies at the foot of the hill Grinlow, capped by the modern tower which took the place of the old Solomon's Temple, so called from a local publican. Buxton is not very happily situated as a centre for visiting the most famous places in Derbyshire, unless one uses the railway freely, for it lies near the Staffordshire boundary, in a hollow of the hills which only afford a single level outlet, the road through Ashwood Dale to Miller's Dale. Yet the good walker, who is not repelled by the desolate grandeur of bleak uplands, will find much to reward him in the high ground around Buxton, whether he takes the Stockport road over Corbar Hill, or the Macclesfield road over the edge of Goyt's Moss to the Cat and Fiddle, or toils up the dreary Leek road to Axe Edge dreary, that is to say, for the first three miles, and then changing, as if by magic, to a noble moorland prospect, commanding distant hills and a broad valley.

Near the fourth milestone he will reach a little farm on the

right hand. A gate in the opposite wall opens on to a flagged way leading to a spring in the field, banked up and covered with a large flat stone. This is the Dove Head—though there are those who deny its title, in spite of the intertwined monogram of the initials of Walton and Cotton. The stone was cracked by a severe frost in 1903, but the damage is not serious, for the carving is not more than half a century old. The story that the two famed fishers tracked the Dove to its birthplace and then chiselled out their initials is only a pleasing fiction. They were much too busy fishing to come so far afield. The water from the spring sinks into the sloping hillside, reappears at its foot as a tiny stream, and we can follow with our eyes the course of the rivulet as it winds down the valley. Such is the unsheltered cradle of the pretty Dove on the side of Axe Edge.

From Dove Head Farm let us go on to the Traveller's Rest, the inn at the cross-roads where the Leek road swerves to the right. We take the one on the left which makes for Longnor, and turn leftwards again at the second by-road. Far ahead of us the twin roads to Longnor are plainly discernible, the principal one—which we have just quitted—keeping along the edge which scowls down upon a bleak Staffordshire moorland of heather and pasture. The other clings to the opposite side of the plateau and is seen emerging from a hidden valley below us. Down into this valley we go by a rough road which we soon exchange for a footpath on the right, a footpath that casually calls at the door of every cottage on the way, crossing a cart track here and a lane there, but always falling. Then, passing through the scattered hamlet, we get between hedges again and begin to mount the hill over a loose-surfaced road which must scare away anything on wheels more fragile than a cart. But at the top of the rise we are rewarded with a prospect of extreme beauty. The Dove winds along at the foot of the slope on our left. Its waters are not seen, but its path is clearly marked by the line of green bushes through the

meadows. Opposite is smooth rising ground with trees on its lower slopes and a road slanting lengthwise down its side. This rising ground is Hollins Hill, lying in the middle of a wide valley across which we look to its further side—a magnificent mass of hills sloping to the south-east from the line of Axe Edge. Just to the right of Hollins Hill, the edge rises into Chrome Hill, almost precipitous for half its height, and with sharp, jagged sky-line. Beyond it to our right, and in clear continuation of the same chain of hills, is Parkhouse Hill, a perfect pyramid in form, with green, swelling base. Beyond this are Hitter Hill and Aldery Cliff, and the chain terminates in High Wheeldon, whose cone rises to nearly 1400 feet. These form the protecting hills above the left bank of the Dove; at the back of them stretches the wild expanse crossed by the Buxton and Ashbourne road. No finer serrated edge is to be found in Derbyshire than that of Chrome Hill, and no more delightful contrast than is afforded by those two neighbours, Chrome and Parkhouse. Up among the rugged boulders of Chrome is the Devil's House and Parlour, where once the Prince of Darkness tried to hang himself, but bungled it and came to life again, for he is said to haunt the hill from midnight to daybreak—hours when you had much better be safe under roof.

The little hamlet of Hollinsclough is at our feet—its modern church the baldest structure wherein dull sermon was ever preached. But, like so many other places in Derbyshire, the Church of England was lax and careless here while it had no rival and only awakened when much of its flock had strayed into other sheepfolds. This district on the Staffordshire border was one of the early strongholds of Methodism, which slowly spread from hamlet to hamlet. The pious founder, here in little Hollinsclough, was one John Lomas, who lies buried in a vault under the Wesleyan Chapel which he helped to build in 1801 at a cost of £355. Lomas was a bit of a celebrity in his way. He had made his money as a packman,

hawking Manchester and Macclesfield goods round the countryside and then employing other travellers to do the like for him. A number of these people had their headquarters a few miles away at Flash—where Lomas himself was living when he was "soundly converted" in 1783. He had been a zealous Churchman and strongly prejudiced against the Methodists, but conviction came to him one winter night. It happened in this way, as described in a curious little book on Leek Methodism. Mr. and Mrs. Lomas were sitting together at home one evening when the lady expressed her intention to go to service at the chapel and listen to "the venerable Mr. Costerdine." Mr. Lomas was "highly displeased and insisted that she should not, alleging among other reasons that it was dark and she would fall. But Mrs. Lomas knew that his objection rose not so much from solicitude on her behalf as from enmity to the Methodists and this "caused her to sit down and weep." Oh, easy welling woman's tears! Mr. Lomas was greatly disturbed. One can see him fidgetting and fretting and fuming. "Presently he started up, ordered the servant to bring his great coat and exclaimed 'I find we shall have no quietness until your missis goes to the chapel, so I shall be obliged to go with her.'" So off they set, and as they went "he murmured very much and found great fault with the community." You can almost hear him chuntering as he stumbled up the dark road with Mrs. Lomas quiet and triumphant on his arm. There was the usual sequel. The "venerable Mr. Costerdine" preached that night with power; Mr. Lomas was made uneasy, and when his wife asked him what he thought of the sermon he merely said, "Either the old man or I must be very wrong." That was the first step; the rest was simple; and now he lies under the communion rails of the chapel which he built a century ago.

Returning to Buxton again, let us leave the town by the road which climbs steeply up to Fairfield and then turns leftwards across the windy common, shared by golfers and quarrymen. No satisfactory view of Buxton itself is obtainable

from this side, though there are good retrospects towards the high ridges about Axe Edge. The road keeps along the top of a lofty plateau and, in a long mile, brings us to the outlet of the Batham Gate, which runs straight over the rise to Peak Forest station, and continues over dreary uplands till it drops down to the Roman camp at Brough. On our left is the railway from Buxton to Chapel, and beyond it the ground rises in tiers from Brown Edge to Black Edge and from Black Edge to Combs Edge lying at the back of all. In the triangle formed by Buxton, Chapel, and Whaley Bridge, it is always Combs Edge and Combs Moss which occupy the highest ground in the middle. Ahead of us is an enormous white tailing of limestone waste, and here, nearly twelve hundred feet above sea level, Doveholes lies beneath us—a forlorn village, with an ugly new church and a "bull ring" (so called) behind the churchyard. This "bull ring" is really a circle like that of Arborlow, with a detached square mound lying a little to the south-west. Its megaliths are gone.

The road improves in the next mile as we approach Barmoor Clough. We have now on our left hand the old Peak Forest tramway from Doveholes to the head of the Peak Forest canal at Bugsworth. Benjamin Outram, the pioneer of tramways, was the engineer of this undertaking in 1794, the double line being laid down in 1803. The quarries which it was built to serve lie a mile to the right of the Buxton Road. At Barmoor Clough our road enters another at right angles. Chapel is a long two miles to the left through pleasant country, but we turn rightwards and soon approach a modern house. Nearly opposite its principal entrance—not the first gates—is the famous Ebbing and Flowing Well. At least it was famous once: but fashion has changed, now that the cause of its vagaries is no longer a scientific mystery. We will reserve until we get to Tideswell consideration of the question whether this or the Tideswell well is the old Wonder of the Peak, though to me the claims of this one seem unchallengeable. It lies in

the field a few feet below the level of the road, shaped like a horse-shoe, and built up in the middle with blocks of stone to the height of about 5 feet, following the rise of the ground. A stone trough about 18 inches wide lies round the inside of the horse-shoe, so shallow that the water overflows, forms a pool in the centre, and runs off to an outlet beneath the road. The pool is but a few inches deep, for the most part covered with scum, and, as the cattle come here to drink, the adjoining ground is often a muddy quagmire and the well altogether is most uninspiring. It was not my fortune to see it "working": nor did I wait in the hope of being specially favoured. Those who have seen it justify its name say that it is very capricious in its behaviour, that sometimes it ebbs and flows twice in an hour, while at other times it sulks for days together. Enthusiast as I am for most ancient marvels, I can raise no enthusiasm for the Barmoor Well.

A mile further on we climb to the little hamlet of Sparrowpit at the cross roads. The old road lay straight up the steep incline which we see on our left hand, as the position of the cottages on its front would tell us even if we did not know. That way runs direct to Chapel, dropping down three hundred feet in the last mile, and is little more than half as long as its modern supplanter, which was cut when men began to be more merciful to their beasts. Here, at the Sparrowpit, the big main road to Tideswell and Stony Middleton turns down to the right and the road to Castleton through the Winnats lies straight ahead. Was it not here, indeed, that the horses of Henry and Clara—the victims of the famous Winnats murder—were found, after galloping in fright from the scene of the tragedy? So the landlord of the little inn will tell you, with what other gossip he has picked up during thirty years in this outlying spot. These remote inns are not like those of cities, which put out placards when they change hands as though to show that such change had been urgently needed. People settle down in them and become fixtures, the common friends of all who use the roads. And

they have exciting times in hard winters at the Sparrowpit, when the snow falls fast and the wind is in a mood for piling up great drifts. In 1888 the dwellers in the inn woke one morning to find that their top storey windows were darkened, and they had two days of hard digging before a vehicle could get through. The Castleton road was blocked at Perry Foot and not a cart could reach Peak Forest for a week.

We have started on a roundabout road to Chapel, let us make still another *détour* to Stonyford and Slackhall. Go up the old Chapel road for three hundred yards or so to a by-way on the right hand, known locally as the Roman Road, though I doubt its title to the name. It rises to about a hundred and fifty feet above Sparrowpit and discloses a fine view of Rushup Edge on the left hand side of the road to Castleton with Mam Tor at its far extremity. A few yards further along the ridge an entirely new prospect opens out, for Chapel-en-le-Frith lies stretched below us on the opposite slope of the broad valley, with its giant viaducts below Eccles Pike and the water of the Combs Reservoir shining blue under the hills. The road tumbles down to Stonyford—just a stray cottage or two—and, after being joined by another by-road from the left, ascends steeply. Where it forks, keep to the left and descend sharply into Slackhall. A tumulus on the rising ground to your left was the scene of one of Bendigo's famous fights. He and his antagonist—Luny, I think, was the name—came out here to be undisturbed by the police, and Chapel never saw a motlier crowd than that which poured through it in every kind of vehicle to see the Nottingham bruiser fight at Slackhall. Of course Bendigo won, for was not his mother wrestling in prayer at home for her boy's success all through the time fixed for the encounter?

Slackhall is a pretty spot. A toll-gate stood here among the fine trees by the grassy triangle, whose noble chestnut was planted at Queen Victoria's Coronation in 1837. Now the few trim cottages are a sort of dependency of Ford Hall, whose lodge-gates are close by, near some outbuildings. Cross

and look at these, for though the byre looks as though it had stood there for generations, the attendant manure-heap marks the site of a little Quaker chapel. And only a few yards away is the quaintest burial ground, some sixteen yards square, not so pretty as the one at Jordans, near Chalfont St. Giles, yet with a certain fascination of its own. It lies just inside the lodge-gates, behind the cottages fronting the road, and one or two old gravestones may be seen against the wall. "I. R. sonne T. R. buried 17th day, 8th month, 1671"—so runs the legend on one, with the curious secretiveness which used to mark the Quakers in the days of their sore persecution. For a century prior to 1880 no burial took place here; since then the Society of Friends has tended the little place—there is still a small meeting-house in Chapel. But people might pass along the high road for a life-time and never guess the presence of this tiny cemetery.

Ford Hall lies bowered in woods in a valley of its own, deep down below the Castleton Road. For three centuries the manor has been in the continuous possession of the Bagshawes. A hamlet of that name lies along the lane which entered our road near Stonyford, and an old farm-house there—relic of a larger building—still bears the name of Bagshawe Hall. The first Bagshawe of Ford dates from about 1600, when William Bagshawe of Hucklow Hall, Abney, and Litton, and Lord of the Manor of Great Hucklow, bought the Ford estate from his relatives, the Cresswells. His eldest son, also a William, became known to fame as the Apostle of the Peak. He was born at Litton, near Tideswell, in 1627—8, and, against the wishes of his father, entered the Church. His first curacy was at Attercliffe, near Sheffield, and in 1651 he was ordained at Chesterfield, "by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." Then, in the following year, he became Vicar of Glossop, and so remained till the Act of Uniformity in 1662, when he was one of the two thousand Ministers driven from their benefices. Finding an asylum at Ford Hall, he succeeded to the property

in his own right on his father's death in 1669, and dwelt there till his death in 1702. Ford Hall thus became the centre from which he carried on his missionary work, quietly and cautiously if the times were adverse and the Government were in persecuting mood, boldly and openly whenever the penal laws against Nonconformists were relaxed somewhat. The first chapel which Bagshawe opened was at Malcoff—variant spellings are Malcroft and Malcalf—a mile to the north of Ford, but he travelled perpetually around the district, preaching his evangelical gospel with earnestness and power. His diary shows him to have been often at Hucklow, Middleton, Chelmorton, Hope, Chinley, Charlesworth, and Bradwell, and his usual practice was to preach on Sunday mornings at Hucklow and in the evenings at Malcoff.

Bagshawe does not seem to have suffered much molestation, for though warrants were once or twice issued against him, they were never executed. Such an entry in his diary as, "I dined with and was honoured by the justices, and did afterwards stay a little," shows sufficiently well that he and the authorities agreed to tolerate one another. Moreover, the Apostle frequently "conformed" by attending service in the parish church at Chapel-en-le-Frith. His diary, unfortunately, is not of much interest, for it is mainly a bald recital of facts, and only occasionally do we get such personal entries as the following, "My dear, dear wife, who eateth very little, whilst she was eating something, was near being choked, having much ado to get her wind, as the phrase is, or to breathe for a considerable time, but blessed be the Lord, help was sent from Heaven." Bagshawe composed a number of theological treatises and the title of one of them, *De Spiritualibus Pecci*, is interesting as being suggested by the poem of Hobbes. But its interest goes no further. I am confident that no one who essays to read the Apostle's theology and his expositions of Antichrist will get beyond a page or two. How very dead is the dead theologian! Bagshawe's best memorial is the

tradition of his work, which still survives in the district. He trimmed anew the lamp of religion in the Peak when it had nearly flickered out.

As we have said, Bagshawe inherited the Ford estate on his father's death, but the most valuable share of the property, Hucklow and Litton, went to his brother John, while Wormhill passed to a third brother. The Elizabethan house was partially rebuilt in the Italian style, with terrace gardens, in about 1730. Most of the Bagshawes seem to have been worthy descendants of the Apostle and to have carried on the Evangelical tradition. The black sheep of the family was Samuel Bagshawe, who died without issue in 1804. He was one of the spendthrift dandies of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and was, for a time, an associate of "Poor Fred," Prince of Wales. As a result, Ford Hall was stripped of everything to pay his debts, the estate was denuded of timber, and the whole country-side called shame on him. Not until 1795, when the Hall was almost in ruins, did Samuel return and live there. By that time he was a thoroughly reformed character, and when he died his wife, a preaching lady of the most severe type, erected to his memory in Chapel-en-le-Frith Churchyard a marble monument which cost a thousand pounds—eight hundred of which she borrowed! But the wintry winds of Chapel soon ravaged the delicate marbles, and the monument fell into such a melancholy state that it had to be taken down. The south front of Ford Hall—which ill consorts with the Italian part of the building—was built by the Rev. William Bagshawe about sixty years ago from bastard Gothic designs of his own.

As we turn from Slackhall to go down the hill towards Chapel, we pass the old building from which the hamlet takes its name, a fine two-gabled house, where the Slacks lived till the new road from Chapel to Castleton was driven through their garden, and then they migrated further down the road

and built themselves a new house among the trees. Lying back on the right is Bowden Hall, rebuilt when it passed into the hands of the Slacks, and then we soon drop down into Chapel and begin to climb its long steep street, whose chief feature, perhaps, is the abundance of its inns—a sure sign of its lying on a once frequented pack-horse track. Chapel's full name of Chapel-en-le-Frith denotes a clearing in the High Peak, where the foresters built a church. The forest in Norman times spread over the whole of the north-west corner of the county, comprising the entire vast parishes of Glossop, Chapel, and Castleton, and part of the parishes of Bakewell, Tideswell, Hathersage, and Hope. All this was known as the King's Forest of the High Peak, or *De Campana*, and was divided into three parts, Longendale to the north and north-east, Edale to the east, and the Champaign to the south and south-west. The whole tract was bestowed by William the Conqueror in his usual open-handed way upon William Peveril, whose son was banished and had his estates forfeited to the crown. Henry II. gave them to his son John, afterwards King; Edward II. gave them first to his favourite, Gaveston, and then to Earl Warren for life only; while Edward III. bestowed them upon his wife, Queen Philippa, at his marriage, and, when she died, upon John of Gaunt. Since that time they have continued part of the Duchy of Lancaster. The forest was under the jurisdiction of a Justice of the Forest, who held two great courts at Tideswell every year and three lesser courts three times a year, for the settlement of disputes and the punishment of such offences as poaching, unlawful grazing, and cutting down of timber. The chief officer was called a High Steward, and had under him an army of privileged subordinates. But by 1670 the district was almost completely disafforested, the land being shared among the freeholders. One Thomas Eyre, of Gray's Inn, was astute enough to secure for himself no less than eight thousand acres.

The church at Chapel stands well on high ground off the main street –"in a windie and tempestuous countrie," to quote the words of the local inhabitants three centuries ago—but the fabric has been rebuilt and restored at bad periods. Nothing is left of the original church founded by the foresters in honour of St. Thomas à Becket, and of the fourteenth century rebuilding little survives. The tower is of the eighteenth century, with a good peal of bells, and curfew is still sounded at eight o'clock in the evening, except on Saturdays and Sundays, when the bell rings at seven. The monuments are poor, especially when we consider the number of old manors in the neighbourhood. Chapel Church, however, has one interesting association with the time of the Civil Wars. In 1648, about a month after the battle of Ribbleton Moor, near Preston, where Cromwell, with less than ten thousand men, defeated twenty odd thousand Scots under the Duke of Hamilton and Sir Marmaduke Langdale, some fifteen hundred Scotch prisoners arrived in Chapel and were herded into the church. There they remained from September 14th until September 30th, when they were marched away. But not all. Forty-four died in the church itself; others—an unspecified number—remained behind, unable to march, and were buried on October 2nd. Of those who set out "ten and more" died before they reached Chester. This was bad even for Cromwell's time, but, apparently, there was no protest or inquiry. An old sun-dial with a shaft of red gritstone stands in the churchyard, and in the church itself is an ancient stone coffin brought in from the outside where, in 1760, it served as coping for part of the wall. At that date another stone coffin stood under a pump and served as a watering trough at one of the inns.

The freeholders of Chapel-en-le-Frith enjoy the privilege of electing their own vicar, and to this privilege the people have always clung most tenaciously. Early in the seventeenth century one Thomas Barney foisted himself into the vicarage

—as his immediate predecessor was a Francis Barney it looks as though it were a case of a son claiming to succeed his father—and a Chancery suit was the result. Depositions were taken at Chapel, and a number of the oldest inhabitants all told the same story that the right of election lay with the freeholders, that the chosen nominee was then presented to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield for confirmation, and that the expenses of keeping the church in proper repair fell not upon the parishioners but upon the diocesan authorities. There had been occasions when the Dean and Chapter had tried to secure the right of nomination for themselves, and once the Countess of Shrewsbury—Bess of Hardwick, that is to say—had intrigued with the Dean to put in a parson of her own. But this interference on the part of that meddlesome lady had been successfully resisted. All the witnesses were agreed that the church was in a ruinous condition, so bad indeed that "it was fearfull and terrible for any to be in it or passe through," and one of the deponents "was moved to have set a prop in it but durst not, lest it should have fallen upon his or their heads whilst it should be in doinge." Yet rather than contribute a penny to the cost of restoration, one and all were willing to let the place go to decay. Little, therefore, in the church is anterior to the seventeenth century, for after being patched up subsequent to this Chancery suit it was entirely restored a few years ago.

CHAPTER XII

CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH TO HAYFIELD: KINDERSCOUT AND THE SNAKE INN

A LONG mile out from Chapel, midway between the two roads to Whaley Bridge and pleasantly situated on the lower slopes of Eccles Pike, a smooth hill which just succeeds in rising to a tip, lies what remains of Bradshaw Hall. A beautiful Jacobean gateway bearing the date 1620 and the name and arms of Francis Bradshaw, attests its importance in days gone by. This Francis Bradshaw, was a second cousin of the regicide, John Bradshaw, whose grandfather, a younger son of the Chapel family, had settled at Marple, near Stockport, a few miles away. The regicide died without issue in 1659, after suffering—according to Royalist traditions of doubtful authenticity—agonies of remorse in the Deanery of Westminster, where he had taken up his quarters. This old Hall is said to have been built originally in the shape of a cross; it was transformed into two dwellings half a century ago in order to accommodate the families of two brothers. Some relics of ancient grandeur still survive, a fine oak panelled room in one house, and in the other a handsomely moulded ceiling at the top of the staircase, with the legend in plaster,

> "A man without mercy of mercy shall miss,
> But he shall have mercy who merciful is.
> Love GOD but not gold."

Troja fuit: fuimus Troes. The Bradshaws have gone the

way of most of those who built these charming old Derbyshire houses.

From Bradshaw Hall let us take the cart track down into the

Bradshaw Hall, near Chapel-en-le-Frith.

main road from Chapel to Manchester, joining it at Cockyard. Cocking and bull and bear baiting used to be popular sports in this district. There was generally a bull-baiting after Sunday morning service outside the church at Chapel, and one old man I spoke with told me that when he was a boy at

Little Hucklow the iron bull ring, fixed in a big stone, was still to be seen in the middle of the village. At Bagshawe traces of a bear pit are yet to be found, and for many years bears were kept by a local family of the name of Shotwell or Shotter. At holiday times Shotter and his bear went to the village feast just as the rifle-gallery proprietor goes there now. Nor was it a small distinction to own a bear. Consider the pride of the junior Shotters ! A mile's walk from Cockyard brings us to the hamlet of Tunstead Milton or Milltown, the home of the skull familiarly spoken of as Dick o' Tunstead. Dick refuses to be buried. He will not rest in any grave, and so worries those who bury him that they are glad to dig him up again. According to local legend, a certain Ned Dickson of Tunstead went to fight in the old French Wars. Believing him to be dead a cousin entered into his property, and when Dickson returned to claim his own, this cousin and his wife murdered him in his sleep. Since that day the skull has never rested quietly in the earth. It used to be nailed to a rafter ; now it reposes in a window seat and is still an object of reverence to the folk of the countryside. When the North-Western railway people took their line past Dick's house, a bridge which they built near by was thrown down by a quicksand and they were obliged to modify very considerably their original plans. And this was naturally attributed to Dick o' Tunstead !

From here a pleasant by-road on the right takes us up to Ollerenshaw Hall, where we turn leftwards to Horwich House, at the side of which lies the Roosdyche. This is a spot well worth visiting for its own beauty as well as for the mystery attaching to it. It is a valley on the hilltop, a deep cleft about three-quarters of a mile long, banked up on either side and open at each end. Its average width is about forty yards and its banks are some ten to thirty feet high, set with lines of elms and other trees, while in the centre is a broad grassy stretch of sward, tolerably level, though in places rather hummocky. No observant person could enter this glade

without looking round in surprise and wondering whither he had strayed. The first impression is that it is certainly artificial and made with hands. Yet this is the very crux of the difficulties attaching to the Roosdyche, and I am told that more than one distinguished scientist has recently pronounced it to be of natural, though unusual, formation. There are parallels for most eccentricities in Nature—even the most outrageous. The old theory that the Roosdyche was a Roman race-course by no means commends itself to my judgment, though it is tempting enough as one looks down the glade and remembers the magnet-shaped Hippodrome at Constantinople. But, after all, the Romans did not plant their race-courses on the tops of remote hillsides. Roman roads ran near by, it is true, but no great military station lay close at hand, and save for the soldiers of the camps on the line of communications there can have been no resident Roman population in this part of Derbyshire, as there was, for example, in the south of England. A Roman race-course was not a regimental recreation ground for the amusement of the legates, centurions and soldiers of the legion ; it was rather a town amusement, a gambling machine, a spectacle, implying crowds of spectators and huge training establishments. And it is ludicrous to think of these things in connection with this glade high above the valley of the Goyt ! Whatever the Roosdyche was it was not a Roman Rhedagna or chariot-course, and the easy identification of the goal and the *spina* in the middle, and the branch recesses which served as *carceres* or stables, is all pure fancy. I can find no record of anything Roman having been found on the Roosdyche. Even that negative evidence is almost sufficient, for if the Roosdyche were artificial the Roman Governor who built it would certainly have provided stone seats and stone buildings. No, we must resign the race-course theory and give Nature credit for a curious freak.

The further end of the Roosdyche commands a fine outlook

over the valley of the Goyt, now abandoned to industrialism and lost to beauty. We can either drop down to Whaley Bridge on the North-Western railway, or to Bugsworth—for years it has been contemplating a change of name—which is on the Midland system close to Chinley. I had intended to walk from Chinley over Chinley Churn—a corruption, they say, of cairn—to Hayfield. The Churn is 1,000 feet above the valley, itself 500 feet above sea level, and affords noble views across to Eccles Pike and to Combs Moss. But it was growing late and, as rain threatened, I turned to New Mills and then took train to Hayfield, three miles away, up the valley of the Sett.

Hayfield's present importance—whatever that may be—is derived from its mills; its ancient consequence was due to its position midway between Glossop and Chapel, and very welcome must the first glimpse of its ugly church tower have been to the packman and his string of horses as they descended into shelter from the tempestuous moors. Ugly, that is to say, if the old building was anything like the present one which, as Dr. Cox justly says, was "cheaply run up" in 1818. As at Chapel, the freeholders of Hayfield elect their own vicars. John Wesley preached in Hayfield Church in 1755, when a clergyman named Badley was the incumbent, a man so popular with the freeholders that they built him a parsonage and made out the deed of gift not to the vicar of Hayfield but to Badley himself. So, when the vicar died, his daughters at once sold the vicarage, which for forty years, from 1764 to 1805, was known as the Shoulder of Mutton Inn. Then the property became merged in the Park Hall estate of Captain Jack White, who took down the sign of the Shoulder of Mutton and again turned it into a parsonage. But soon after the Squire quarrelled with the parson and turned him out, and once more the study became transformed into a bar and remains so to this day. Such is the odd story of the Royal Hotel.

This Captain Jack White, of whose mansion, Park Hall, we

shall catch a glimpse as we climb up to the moors, was one of the best known sporting celebrities in the English shires during the first half of the nineteenth century. The son of a Manchester doctor who had made his fortune, Jack White knew no profession but that of sport, from his birth in 1791 to his death in 1866, at the age of seventy-five. His success as a gentleman rider was extraordinary. In 1823, when riding for Mr. Lambton, he rode nine out of twelve winners at Stapleford Park and eight out of twelve at Lambton. The Croxton Park and Hinton Park meetings also witnessed his many triumphs, and, even when he was forty-three years of age, he trained down ten pounds between a Wednesday night and the following Friday morning. But his greatest feat was one of endurance. He began a certain winter day with two good runs with the hounds, of forty minutes and seventy minutes respectively, the second kill taking place thirty-four miles from Melton. White returned, changed, had a chop and a cup of tea, and then rode home from Melton to Hayfield, a distance of seventy-five miles, crossing the Derbyshire moors in a blinding snow-storm. He arrived at Park Hall at seven o'clock at night, having ridden one hundred and sixty miles since breakfast. Captain White left Melton in 1842 and was Master of the Cheshire Hunt for twelve years. His falls were innumerable, but nothing broke his nerve, not even when his horse fell on him in a drain, crushed his chest and three ribs, and smashed his collar-bone and his ankle. His last bad accident was to alight in a green pond and have another horse and rider jump in on the top of him. Captain White was also an enthusiastic cocker. He always fought a main every year with the Earl of Sefton and the Earl of Derby, and in the great match at Melton between Smith Barry and Johnnie Blunt for fifteen hundred guineas, the latter was cocked by White, who won by a single battle. Such a man was naturally the hero of the countryside –at least of the unregenerate countryside –but by a strange irony of fate his mansion, Park Hall, is now the headquarters of the

Co-operative Holiday Association in connection with the Home Reading Union! Was ever contrast more complete? Probably hundreds of sporting men in England would consider that their apotheosis was assured if there had been said of them what "Nimrod" once wrote of White:—

"Captain White may be safely placed among the hardest and best riders of England, and taken in the double capacity of a rider of races and a rider to hounds, is decidedly the very best. I consider him indeed the exemplar of horsemen, for he has every attribute. In addition to an elegant seat he has fine hands, a quick eye, good temper and undaunted nerve despite the awful falls he has had. With hounds it has been said that he has never been out in his life, whether he liked his horse or not, that he did not try to get to them. And it will be remembered he once played a duet with Mr. Assheton Smith when every other man was beaten, viz. on that memorable Belvoir day, when hounds ran nineteen miles point blank, as the song said:—

"White on the right, sir, 'midst the first flight, sir,
Is quite out of sight of those in the rear."

Hayfield Fair, once the pride of the neighbourhood, has fallen from its high estate, but the jigging lilt of the song to which it gave rise still sets one's foot a tapping:

"Come, lasses and lads, take leave of your dads,
And away to the Fair let's hie;
For every lad has gotten his lass
And a fiddler standing by.
For Jenny has gotten her Jack,
And Nancy has gotten her Joe,
With Dolly and Tommy, good lack,
How they jig it to and fro!"

Those who are learned in Hayfield lore will tell you that the Polly Simpson of a later verse was a real character and no mere figment of the ballad maker's imagination.

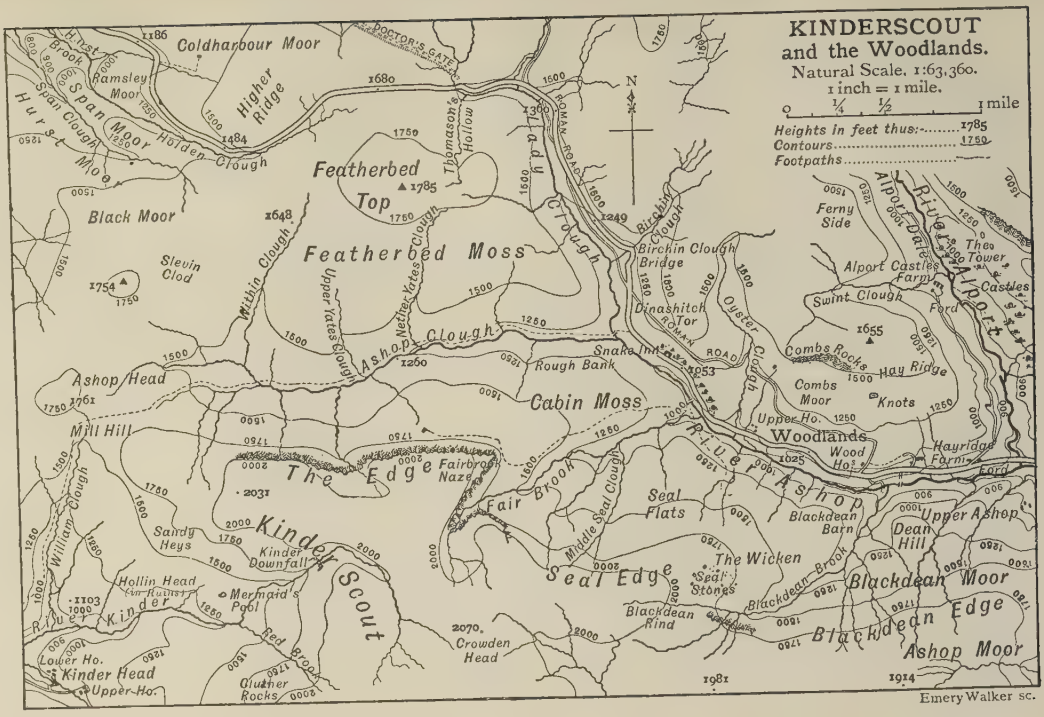
Hayfield is one of the most convenient places from which to approach the wildest districts of the High Peak. That title—often taken in vain further to the south—belongs to a wider tract of Derbyshire than is generally supposed by those

who have not looked closely at the map. If arbitrary boundaries must be named, we should say that it was bounded on the north by the line of the Great Central Railway from Glossop to Penistone, on the east by the series of moors and edges between Penistone and Ashopton, on the south by the Dore and Chinley railway, and on the west by the roads between Chinley and Glossop. In the middle of this area, some twenty miles by ten, rises a sprawling mountain mass with broad moors stretching down on every side and disjointed hills and ridges set irregularly upon them. The mountain mass is Kinderscout Moss or simply Kinderscout, the name of one particular locality being often applied to the whole. There is no High Peak proper, in the sense that Mt. Everest, or even Snowdon, is a peak; Kinderscout Moss is a lofty plateau, in shape an irregular parallelogram with fantastic deviations, but presenting to the eye as you approach it from any one side the usual Derbyshire edge. When distance softens the lines of these edges and gives a smooth rounded look to what in truth is pointed and ragged, the higher eminences of the Moss stand up like peaks, but the name itself is a curious misnomer. Or, if the learned philologists are right and the word Peak in this connection does not signify a pointed hill, the name of High Peak is unfortunate, because it inevitably gives rise to false impressions. This great plateau is some five miles in length, and in width varies from one mile to two at its western extremity. It is covered with peaty moss and heather, intersected by little ravines and patches of bog, a desolate tract where it is well to know the way without possibility of going wrong, and well to be sure of your sky before you venture. Even on the moors of its lower slopes are certain fearsome patches. No place gets the name of Featherbed Moss or Black Moss for nothing. Such words on the map should act like a danger signal to the wary.

The Moss, and indeed most of the High Peak—which is not crossed by a single high road except diagonally from Glossop

to Ashopton—is private, save for a few footpaths. They seem extraordinarily few, considering the extent of the area in question, until we remember that until quite recent times these moors were almost untrodden by the foot of man. Our ancestors looked at them and shivered even in midsummer. To them the wild stretches were uncanny and repellent: and the sporting owner, in the modern sense of the term, had not come into being. Consequently, rights of way are scarce, and this stretch of Derbyshire reminds one more of the Highlands of Scotland, where the peasants have been hunted out of certain glens by the landlords to make room first for sheep and then for deer. The High Peak is similarly sacred to grouse, and, if you deviate, you do so at your peril. Indeed, that we may walk at all from Hayfield to the Snake Inn on the Glossop Road without molestation by keepers is due to the efforts of the Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society. This was founded in its present form some ten years ago, though there had been an earlier local society at Hayfield which had gallantly fought the battle of public rights since 1876. Such societies deserve the liberal support of everyone who loves walking, and, indeed, of every tourist, for a landowner can usually bring a great deal of direct and indirect pressure to bear upon the local people who oppose his attempts to close down footpaths. The society in question actually raised a guarantee fund of a thousand pounds to maintain in the courts the right of the public to cross the moor to the Snake Inn, but the landowners consented to an interview and, after long negotiation, agreed that a path should be staked off with white posts. They conceded as a reluctant favour what they bluntly denied as a right, and the upshot of much heated controversy may be seen on the notice boards which decorate the moors at intervals. For example:—

"F. J. Sumner, Esq., and others have conceded permission and right for the public in perpetuity to traverse on foot this moorland by the route


KINDERSCOUT
and the Woodlands.
Natural Scale, 1:63,360.
1 inch = 1 mile.
0 1/4 1/2 1 mile
Heights in feet thus:- 1785
Contours 1750
Footpaths
Coldharbour Moor
Higher Ridge
Ramsley Moor
Span Moor
Holden Clough
Hurst Moor
Swan Clough
Hurst Brook
Doctor's Gate
Roman Road
Thomason's Hollow
Featherbed Top
1785
Featherbed Moss
Black Moor
Slevin Clod
1754
Within Clough
Upper Yates Clough
Ashop Nether Yates Clough
Ashop Clough
Ashop Head
Mill Hill
William Clough
Kinder River
Kinder Scout
Sandy Heys
Kinder Downfall
Hollin Head
Mermaid's Pool
Red Brook
Lower Ho.
Kinder Head
Upper Ho.
Clusher Rocks
The Edge
Fairbrook Naze
2037
Cabin Moss
Rough Bank
Snake Inn
Roman Road
Rushy Clough
Birchin Clough
Bridge
Dinashitch Tor
Oyster Clough
Fair Brook
Middle Seal Clough
Seal Flats
Seal Edge
Seal Stones
The Wicken
Blackdean Rind
Crowden Head
2070.
Blackdean Brook
Blackdean Barn
Blackdean Moor
Blackdean Edge
Ashop Moor
Upper Ashop
Dean Hill
Ferny Side
Alport Castles Farm
Swint Clough
Ford
Alport Castles
Thea Tower
River Alport
Combs Rocks
Hay Ridge
Combs Moor
Knots
Upper Ho.
Woodlands
Wood Ho.
Hayridge Farm
Ford
River Ashop
1655
1053
1249
1648
1680
1484
1186
1761
1981
1914
Emery Walker sc.

indicated by posts, on the understanding that this is the only route to be followed and that there be no divergence therefrom or trespass upon any parts of the moor."

A treaty is a treaty, and it is the manifest duty of the public to respect the terms on which they enjoy unchallenged access to the moor.

The first of these notice boards faces you as you mount the steps on the left hand side of Jumble Lane and ascend the hill. From here we look down into the little town of Hayfield where the mill-dams gleam like blue lakes and reconcile one to the chimneys at their side. Chinley Head stands up big and grand, with the main road to Chinley at its base on the left hand; on its right is the valley where river and railway run down to New Mills around the bend. To our right is the wider valley, facing north, where Hayfield stretches out to Little Hayfield, and Captain White's old mansion lies in the trees by the mill. There is high ground well back on the opposite side of the Glossop Road—Lantern Head they call it —and, as your eye travels on, it lights on the expanse of Matley Moor and Far Cown Edge and Coombes Tor, near which, on the Ludworth Intakes, by the side of the old Monks Road, you may find Robin Hood's Picking Rods—two upright stones set in stone sockets—and the Abbot's Chair in the wall, where you may rest and conjure up what imaginations you will. On our side of the Glossop Road we can see above the woods of Park Hall to the Knot and Burnt Hill, far beyond the Leygate Head Moor which we enter through a gate.

The real moors at last, and it was my fortune to see them, not in the purple glory of autumn, but on a sunny day in early June. The valley was lost to sight, and one's view ranged over an uninterrupted and glorious expanse of yellow and green and dark brownish patches, a gorgeous patchwork quilt which Nature had flung over the undulating bosom of the hills. Touches of white flecked the sombre heather, but at this season of the year the whortleberry bushes were the chief

ornament of the moor, and their russet tips burnt like a forecast of autumn on the vivid yellow and green of their stems. Patches of paler and tenderer yellow showed the new bracken, whose fronds were curled tightly up like so many sleeping caterpillars, and where the moor rose to a peak it gleamed in black and purple. As we follow the path our horizon on the right is bounded by a pleasant wood and a wooden shooting box soon comes into view straight in front, with a few butts close at hand—a veritable *memento mori* to the birds, if birds could reason. An old bridle road now joins us from the left; it has come under the slope of the Knot from Car Meadow, nearly three miles out from Hayfield on the Glossop Road, and looks as though it were a continuation of the old Monks Road to Kinder and Edale. Here we turn to the right and descend a little until an entirely new prospect opens out to us. With our backs to the moor we gaze down upon a deep broad valley of cultivated land whose exit lies to the right along the course of the river Kinder, while it runs up on the left towards a big amphitheatre of hills—the western side of lofty Kinderscout. Out of the valley itself there rises a great mound—if we were below we should think it a hill—so rounded that were it not for the stone walls, which trace their zig-zag patterns on its sides, one might think it had been patted smooth by some giant in play.

This valley has its place in literature; it is the Derbyshire home of David and Louie Grieve. Their thin-lipped, shrewish, grasping Aunt Hannah and her shambling husband, Reuben, lived in one of the little farms which we see below us. Needham's Farm is its name in the novel, and the novelist herself, Mrs. Humphry Ward, stayed, while she wrote the book, at Marriott's Farm or Upper House, which, as its name suggests, is the highest inhabited house on this side of Kinderscout. Opinions may differ very much as to the merits of *David Grieve* as a whole, but there is no question as to the power of the opening chapters, and the skill with which

the indefinable atmosphere of the moors is transferred to the pages of her book. In this respect Mrs. Ward has done for Kinderscout what the Brontës did for the Haworth and Keighley moors, and those who have time to spare will find reward in exploring for themselves the course of the Kinder, the little Red Brook where David set his miniature water-wheels, the ruined smithy where he sailed his boats in an iron pan, the shed at Clough End where he listened to the

Kinderscout, from White Brow, Hayfield.

preacher, the mountain torrent of the Downfall where Kinder comes roaring down in flood time through a steep, stony ravine, and the Mermaid's Pool where Jenny Crum was drowned, and to which the two children paid their midnight visit on Easter Eve. The tradition of the Mermaid visiting the pool on Easter Eve, and of the sure immortality awaiting him who sees her bathing, is now counted as foolishness by the people of Hayfield, but there was at least one stalwart old man who fully believed therein a century ago. This was Aaron Ashton—one of Hayfield's minor celebrities—who died

in 1835 at the good old age of a hundred and four. He recollected being taken to Manchester as a child to see the rebels of the '45; he served for nearly thirty years in the army, and was wounded at Bunker's Hill in America by the same shot which killed Major Shuttleworth of Hathersage. When he came back home to Hayfield he never missed going up to the Mermaid's Pool on Easter Eve in the hope of seeing the Mermaid. It is not said whether he claimed to have been successful, but he must have wondered, as the years passed over his head and found him still living, whether he had not caught at least a fleeting glimpse of her unknown to himself.

If there has been heavy rain and the Kinder is in flood, then you should not fail to make your way down into the valley by the bridle path through the gate just below, and follow the stream up to the black cliffs rising precipitously to the summit of Kinderscout proper. Continue to where a great triangular wedge has been gashed out of the mountain, not clearly cut but rudely hacked away, leaving rugged precipices on either side, frowning and cruel. Down the centre comes the Downfall. But let Mrs. Ward describe it:—

"Before the boy's ranging eye spread the whole western rampart of the Peak—to the right the highest point of Kinder Low, to the left edge behind edge, till the central rocky mass sank and faded towards the north into milder forms of green and undulating hills. In the very centre of the great curve a white and surging mass of water cleft the mountain from top to bottom, falling straight over the edge, here some two thousand feet above the sea, and roaring downward along an almost precipitous bed into the stream—the Kinder—which swept round the hill on which the boy was standing, and through the valley behind him. In ordinary times the 'Downfall,' as the natives call it, only makes itself visible on the mountain side as a black ravine of tossed and tumbled rocks. But there had been a late snowfall on the high plateau beyond, followed by heavy rain, and the swollen stream was to-day worthy of its grand setting of cliff and moor. On such occasions it becomes a landmark for all the country round, for the cotton-spinning centres of New Mills and Stockport as well as for the grey and scattered farms which climb the long backs of moorland lying between the Peak and the Cheshire border.

O

I was not fortunate enough to see it in this mood, though I checked my regret when I reflected that a swollen Downfall would also involve sodden moors and heavy walking. But let us keep the path along the middle slope of the hill—White Brow—with the glorious western face of Kinderscout in full panorama on the other side of the valley. Its ridge retains its higher level to the north, then drops suddenly and pursues a lower line, and then rises and falls in irregular outline till it terminates in the Three Knolls, where the cliffs turn suddenly to the east and open out upon the upper part of the Edale Valley. It is a gracious prospect, looking over the vivid green of the dwarf oaks which line the lower slopes of White Brow, and, as we go further along and glance back, we can see down the valley towards Hayfield, and, through the cleft beyond, to the valley of the Sett.

Suddenly the unexpected but unmistakable sound of a locomotive broke upon my ear, and as I wondered whence this should come, a turn of the path, or a more sudden drop in the hillside, enabled me to see what was going on in the valley below. It was a reservoir in the making, the steam navvies were busy digging, and the whole place was in horrible confusion. One of the little farms in the valley had already been swept away: it had been in the possession of the same family for I forget how many generations, and the last tenant was an aged man who had been loth to leave. Order will come out of chaos, no doubt, and the sunlight will flash upon smooth waters, but one is sorry for the necessity. Our path descends, turns a corner to the left around the hillside and drops down to the side of a little brook. We are in a new world here. The valley and the big sweep of Kinderscout are gone; we are in a little fold of the moors and hills, a quiet corner, an intimate recess. Our brook is the William, and the ravine ahead of us is known as William Clough. Before we drop down to the bottom we can look right up to the head of the clough, to where a great purple and yellow claw of the hill

seems to project and block all egress. On either side the hills make close approach, boulder-strewn and covered with bracken and heather, hiding their inequalities and showing smooth moorland surface. We lose the general view of the William Clough as we descend into it. Where we join the brook a square enclosure of stones, black with age, is seen, divided into two parts by a wall. Two forlorn firs stand within it ; a third, quite dead, is still erect ; two more have fallen, carrying with them a portion of the wall. The place has evidently served its day. Once it was a sheep-dipping station ; now the sheep are gone from the moors. The sacred birds must be indulged with an undisturbed chickenhood.

The little brook, whose course we follow, adds an unspeakable charm to this delicious corner of the moors. The babble of its living water is almost the only sound that is heard. The hum of the fields in a June noonday is wanting here. There seems to be no insect life, or none that is audible to the untrained ear. Only one or two bees booming along, grumbling perhaps at the absence of sweet flowers, or just droning in lazy pleasure of their leisurely flight through the still air, and away in the distance the monotonous call of the cuckoo, who outlives his welcome every summer and grows hoarse with calling until he can call no more. But we want here no sounds that will clash with the music of this pretty brook, which we cross and recross a score of times, striding over it here, jumping it there, sometimes with a small boulder for stepping stone, and, just once or twice, a toy bridge. The brook has its shallows and its pools—inches deep—its reaches and cascades. Its cataracts even, where it comes tumbling down with all its force from boulders whole feet in height. It flows with a rattle ; its course is so steep that there is no time for it to linger, and every few yards it is joined by some tiny tributary from some tiny ravine to right or left. What becomes of the water I could not guess, for ever as we mount the brook seems to keep a uniform size. Until, indeed, we near the top, and then the

path grows steeper and we reach the great claw which looked so round and smooth far away back where we first caught sight of it. Here we see that it is a huge rock projecting from the hillside and facing down the ravine which it splits in two, and here we lose the company of our pleasant stream and follow the white posts to the right of the rock, where only a little runnel flows, whose tinkle is lost ere we emerge at last upon the open top. The cool breeze which begins to play upon the cheek tells us that we have gained the summit, not unwelcome after the last few minutes of steep ascent.

It is the open moorland again that we are standing on, and, when we turn our backs on the delightful William Clough, the prospect is as waste and dreary as prospect can be. We are not on Kinderscout Moss proper, but on the col leading to it. The north-eastern tip of the Moss itself is just above us. Mill Hill is its name; a big blunt head of cliff with the thin herbage lying on the solid rock in scaly patches, and bare where most exposed to the storms. A quarter of an hour would take us easily to the summit, but let us respect the minatory notice boards which here shout at us in chorus. Three of these "Thou shalt not" warnings are set within fifty yards of one another, and there is no withstanding a triple commination. The bell we might risk, or the book, but not bell, book and candle combined. And, moreover, those who have climbed to the top say it is hardly worth while!

The view over the moorland gives us the grandeur of desolation—grand but monotonously grand, almost featureless, and, save for the sunlight, sullen and lowering. It remains much the same on our left hand as we turn sharply to the right from the col and begin to face due east. The first half mile is dreary going as the path winds amid black quaking bog-land and marsh, covered with the vivid green which always betokens water. We have enough to do to pick our path; in some places the white direction posts have been torn up and laid flat to serve as causeways. Soon we find ourselves by the side of a

brook, flowing in a channel torn out of the moor when the Ashop—for this is its name—was in flood. On the left the formation is such that we can see nothing, but on the right we get a magnificent view of Mill Hill and the whole northern edge of Kinderscout Moss. Mill Hill is scarcely eighteen hundred feet high and the edge rises to two thousand feet on the highest point of Fairbrook Naze some two miles further on in a straight line, where the cliffs recede and are lost to sight. Here and there great boulders stand up on the summit, jagging the sky line, and at intervals along the steep precipitous sides there are clefts from top to bottom, some so deep as to resemble chasms with bare sides and courses for torrents in their stony beds. The whole vast ridge, whose wonderful beauty of outline and form and mass contrasts delightfully with the moody moors, was ablaze with yellows and greens, harmoniously blended to make the loveliest carpet for the hillside and a broad mirror over whose surface the sailing clouds flung their majestic shadows as they moved through the heavens. We have to pass more stretches of boggy ground before we approach the end of the ridge, and by this time the Ashop, continually reinforced by brooks on either side, has gathered dignity and flows in a more noble channel. Our path trends away from the hills, and in the intervening space a new eminence rises to form the right bank of the river, while the left bank—whereon our path runs—also grows in stature. Suddenly we find that we have entered a new moorland valley, along which we wind until at length we obtain a prospect of its outlet blocked by a great hill which rises across its mouth. On the lower slope of this hill a straight line of stone wall is discernible, and we begin to wonder whether this is not the goal towards which we have been making. A few hundred yards more, and just as we commence a steep and stony descent, we catch sight of a house standing amid trees. It is the Snake Inn. Ten minutes more and the Ashop, flowing over a boulder-strewn reach, joins its waters with those of the Lady Clough Brook, while we,

passing over a plank bridge that is moored to its place by chains which hint at winter violence, scramble up the opposite path and stand once more upon a turnpike road.

It is a notable road, this road from Glossop to Sheffield through Ashopton, the last of the great turnpikes built in the beginning of the nineteenth century, just before people began to see that the steam engine would inevitably supersede the coach. The old road from Manchester to Sheffield was through Stockport, Disley and Whaley Bridge to Chapel-en-le-Frith—a distance of nineteen miles—and then on through Sparrowpit, Castleton and Hathersage, another twenty-one and a quarter, making a total of forty miles and a quarter. The new road saved two miles and the odd quarter, but it also saved time owing to the excellence of its surface and its better gradients. In an old road book published in 1824, the places mentioned *en route* between Glossop and Sheffield are Lady Clough House, Cocks Bridge, Surry Arms, Rivelin Mill, and Lidgate. Lady Clough House is none other than the Snake Inn, and Cocks Bridge is the old name of Ashopton which still survives in the name of Cockbridge Farm. The Surry Arms, five miles further on, lay across the Yorkshire border. One notes the date 1821 over the door of the Snake Inn, whose name was not derived, as some have supposed, from the road, nor did the road itself owe its name to its windings. As a matter of fact, only visitors speak of the Snake Road; the whole district between the Inn and the junction of the Ashop and the Alport is more correctly known as the Woodlands, and the snake is derived from Cavendish armorial bearings. A family of Longdens were tenants here until 1879, then the house changed hands and the present proprietor, Isaac Rowarth, built the new wing. The palmiest days of the Snake were during the three years that the tunnel at Old Dinting—outside Glossop—was a-building, and before railway connection between Manchester and Sheffield was complete. Then followed a long period of decay, until in recent years the tourist traffic and

sport on the neighbouring moors have helped to restore the balance. But it is a lonesome place. I doubt if in England there is a grander stretch of road than that between Glossop and Ashopton, or one where houses are so rare and the sight of an inn rouses such pleasurable anticipations. And they who have walked, as we have done, from Hayfield over the high moors will be thankful when they first discern the white out-buildings of the Snake. As we look back up the valley through which we have threaded our way, with the moors coming down in swelling outline one behind the other, all desolate and bare, and the great hills rising all around, no matter how genial the sun may be, one can hardly help thinking of what misery it would be to be lost out there in winter. "Kinderscout! the cowdest place areawt," the local people used to say, and one can well believe it. Compared with the moors there is a security, as of streets, even in this lonely road.

CHAPTER XIII

ASHOPTON, DERWENT DALE, WIN HILL AND MAM TOR

Our way lies down the road past the milestone—twenty-one miles to Manchester and seventeen to Sheffield—with a noble view across to Fairbrook Naze, a mile and a half away, whence comes the Fairbrook to join the Ashop, now a river and flowing fast in its rocky bed. A new edge—Seal Edge—of Kinderscout Moss bears us company, running almost parallel with the road, but gradually approximating to it, with lesser hills between, all moorland, all devoted to the birds. On our left the ground rises at once from the roadside and offers little prospect. A few farmsteads lie in the Woodlands on this side, and they have an old Roman road for communication, called the Doctor's Gate higher up towards Glossop. Descending for two miles through a wild and picturesque region, we reach a massive stone bridge of single arch where the Alport flows into the Ashop. This is a delightful spot, which one is loth to leave, at the junction of two valleys. There is the Ashop valley, down which we have come, with moor and hill piled up in intricate confusion one above the other, and on our left is the exquisite dale of the Alport, whose glorious ridge terminates in a cluster of rocky eminences two miles away. In the fork of the two rivers the ground rises up in irregular terraces from eight hundred feet to a thousand, from a thousand to thirteen hundred, and from thirteen hundred to over sixteen hundred. We feel that we are at the inner gate of the mountains, and

that all manner of high romance lies up that smooth road and along that gracious dale.

By the side of the bridge, up the stone front of which the creepers are climbing, stands a tottering sign-post with the names of Hope, Castleton and Bradwell. It slopes down to the Ashop, which it crosses by a ford and a footbridge, and then toils laboriously up the lower slope of the hill. It is the Roman Road, the road to Brough, which to the Roman was the centre of all things in North Derbyshire. As we look and remember that this was the main highway along which people had to travel, whether on urgent business or at leisure, on foot, on horseback, or in springless vehicle, we realise the better, I think, why our ancestors of only a few generations back were not enthusiastic lovers of the mountains, and drew their cloaks about them at the name of moors. There is a noble view from the opposite summit back up the Alport Dale, and down the Woodlands Dale towards Ashopton, before the Cross is reached high on the ridge where you get your first glimpse of the Vale of Hope. But we keep to the main road along Woodlands Dale, sensibly approaching, every step we take, tilled fields and the haunts of men, a long reach of two miles through a broad valley, with clearly defined edges high above it, but edges which have lost their wildness. At the end of the dale the road makes a broad sweep to the right, affording, as we look back, a noble view of green meadows, graceful trees, and gentle hills, with the Ashop, now a river in real earnest, bent like a bow in its course. Henceforward to Ashopton the route presents no special features till we pass beneath the slopes of Crookhill and reach the pleasant village where the Ashop mingles with the Derwent. We have seen it swell to a delightful river from a tiny moorland brook, born among the bogs of the Black Moor—a happy joyous life and a painless euthanasia.

Ashopton itself consists of an inn and a few scattered houses—the inn, which was built for the convenience of

passengers on the coach road by a considerate Duke of Devonshire, now being a favourite *terminus ad quem* for driving parties from Sheffield and the little towns of the Peak. As we shall see when we get up on to higher ground, the situation of Ashopton and its immediate neighbourhood is most lovely, lying where four valleys meet and delightful ridges converge. But its amenities have been most rudely disturbed by the reservoirs which certain Midland towns are constructing in the Derwent valley a few miles away. A light railway from Bamford station now crosses the river and road at Ashopton by an ugly viaduct, and its embankment scars the hillside. It is said, but with what truth I do not know, that this railway is but a temporary affair and will be removed when the reservoir is finished. Such an assurance, one fears, is too good to be true.

One short excursion from Ashopton should in no wise be missed. Near where the main road crosses the Derwent a road turns off to the left, which at once takes us into an exquisite sylvan dale, with a characteristic Derbyshire edge on our right hand. The Derwent flows swiftly on our left, not held up like the Dove by miniature weirs, but permitted to hurry down from the hills at its own pace, and swirling along with such power that in places stone walls have been built to prevent him from destroying his banks. A path leads to the side of the stream a little further on, bordering rich meadows, and the trees grow as luxuriantly along this pretty road as they do in the most sheltered park. It is a short two miles up to the village of Derwent, where a beautiful two-arched bridge spans the river, flagged with stones like a pavement and much too narrow to admit the passage of any vehicle. This is an ancient pack-horse bridge, on the old track which came over Derwent Edge and, crossing the Derwent here, climbed up the hill and down into Woodlands Dale by the side of Rowlee Farm. Nor is it an ordinary bridge clumsily put together: its design, with triangular recesses to enable the foot-passenger to

step aside and avoid the packs, is charming, and at the first glance suggests ecclesiastical influence. So it proves. The White Canons of Welbeck had great estates in Derwent Dale, and we may be sure that this dainty structure was designed by some cowled architect. In the centre of the parapet on the south side is still to be seen the base of the cross which used to adorn the bridge. Near by stands Derwent Hall, one of the country seats of the Duke of Norfolk, an exquisite old

Pack-horse Bridge, near Derwent Hall.

house of many gables, surrounded by lovely gardens and set in the richest corner of this secluded valley. The estate has not been long in the possession of the Howards, and it has no historical associations with that family. The Duke of Norfolk purchased it from the Newdigates: the original building seems to have been put up by one of the Balguys—a Derbyshire family of note, though not of eminence, at the end of the seventeenth century.

We will not pursue the Derwent up to the reservoirs, though

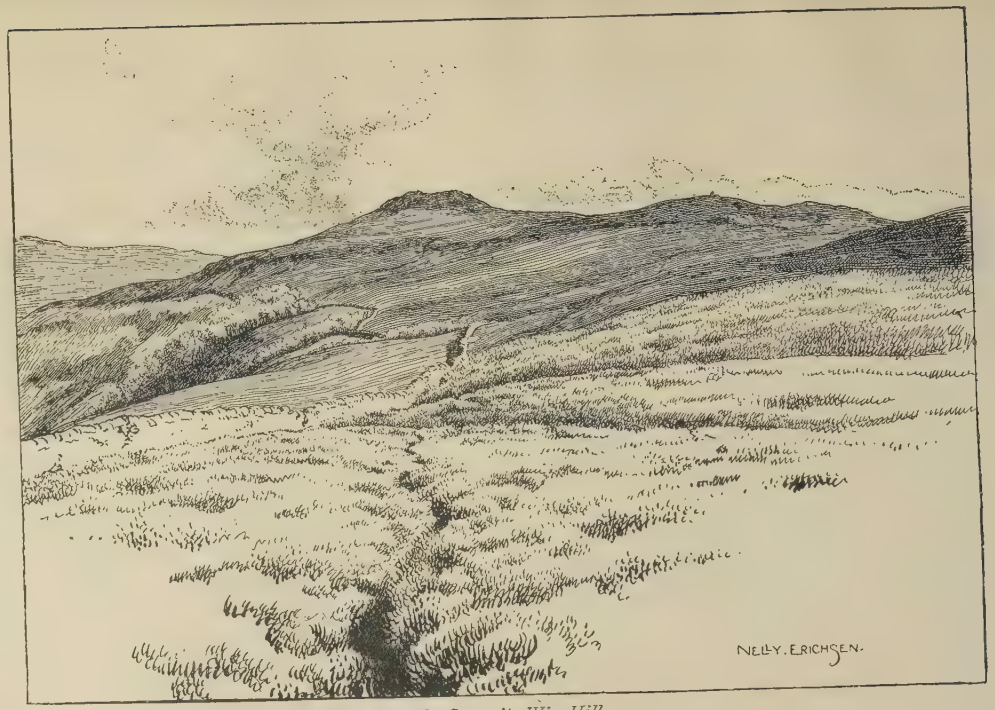
great walks are to be had in its upper reaches and one superlatively fine view down into Derbyshire from the hills at the back. There is good walking too on Derwent Edge across to the Moscar district on the road to Sheffield, and from the hill side across the bridge one can command a splendid prospect of its striking outline. At its northern extremity is the Lost Lad, a mound which stands up like a pillar, and to the right is the curious collection of rocks on the sky line which look like an old woman baking bread in an oven. The likeness is most ludicrous if seen from the proper angle.

Descending the valley again to Ashopton and, turning to the viaduct, we take the road which leads to Cockbridge Farm. This crosses the Ashop a few yards above its junction with the Derwent, and the more insistent flow of the larger stream repels the Ashop for a moment back upon itself and has scooped out deep pools contrasting with the boulder-strewn shallows below. On past the farm and up the hill side by a trickling rivulet and, as we rise, the hamlet of Ashopton discloses itself and the lower valley of the Derwent, with Lady Bower Tor in the background as the southern extremity of Derwent Edge. Around its base the Lady Bower opens, up which runs to the eastward the road to Sheffield, while the Derwent flows due south with the straight line of Bamford Edge high above its left bank. Mounting still by a clear track and making our way towards a slate-roofed cattle shelter, we find our outlook changing. We lose the Derwent, but the view of Bamford Edge grows in precision, and the Lady Bower Tor begins to be dwarfed as the rest of Derwent Edge comes into sight, and soon looks no more than a mere rounded hillock on the lower slope of the Edge. The two little peaks on Crookhill in the fork of the Ashop and Derwent dwindle to tiny knobs, while away to the left we distinguish the road winding up the Woodlands and insinuating itself among the hills of the High Peak that loom on the far horizon. When we quit the upmost pastures and, emerging on

the open moor, make for the corner of the thin plantation of Scotch firs just above us, this change of prospect is intensified. There is the charming Lady Bower Dale with the big white road partly hidden from sight by a spur of the hill and then spreading itself across the high moor. There is the fork at Moscar, where the left hand branch conducts you to the reservoirs of Strines and Dale Dike. But the crest of Bamford Edge, which rose with so much stately dignity a quarter of a mile below, protecting the road and river on their way to the Vale of Hope, is lowered, for at its back rises the far-famed Stanage Edge, spreading away from Moscar Flat to behind Hathersage and the Longshawe moors, and mounting at High Neb midway to the height of fifteen hundred feet. The eye travels down from the sky line of Stanage over Bamford Moor, terminating in a wood on the right hand, at the edge of which a by-road steals up out of the valley and climbs upwards and ever upwards until it too is lost to sight.

But we linger too long, for we are bound for the yellow-green summit just above us, the summit of Win Hill. The last few hundred yards are steep, but no Derbyshire hill is better worth the climb. It is a veritable Spion Kop, though our pyramid, which has lost its apex, be no more than fifteen hundred and twenty feet high. Let us look back for the last time at the familiar scene before we turn to the new. There flows the Ashop with the white road bearing it company—good-bye to it at the bend beyond the Rowlee Farm. Straight up Derwent Dale we can now see, for, though the river be hidden, the road is plain and lo! a far glimpse of the upper reaches where navvies are digging reservoirs for thirsty towns. Just a corner—no more—of the ugly viaduct, but clear view of the pretty Lady Bower and the road to Bamford and the spire of Bamford church among the trees. And here too we behold, for the first time, the main highway from Chapel-en-le-Frith and Castleton to Hathersage and Sheffield, which flows like a white river down the Vale of Hope.

Win Hill overlooks this lovely valley, which we shall command from several view points, but from none more advantageously than from this. The Vale of Hope extends from Castleton to beyond Hathersage, some eight miles in length and not more than a mile wide at its broadest. It is a rich agricultural valley, with smaller valleys radiating from it and hill sides in some places richly wooded, in others cultivated with pastures, in others again resigned to Nature's will. Castleton lies at its head, surrounded by a cincture of hills crowned superbly by Mam Tor. From Mam Tor a high ridge, two miles in length, runs towards us in a north-easterly direction, terminating in Lose Hill, and then drops to the valley of the River Noe, flowing round from Edale where the gap gives us a glimpse of the hills on the southern side of Kinderscout Moss. Round this corner too comes the Dore and Chinley railway, entering the valley near the village of Hope and then running straight to Hathersage and the Grindleford Tunnel. Below Bamford the Derwent flows in and receives the Noe, and Hathersage is two miles beyond on the slope of one of the many hills which mount up to Stanage. Opposite to Hathersage at the south-eastern corner of the Vale lie the exquisite woods and recesses of Highlow, Eyam Woodlands, and Leam, which we shall visit later on; then come the barer stretches of Shatton Edge and Moor; Brough lies at our feet at the mouth of the broadish vale of Bradwell; then Hope and the low hills on the south side of Castleton. The railway has done the Vale little injury. Save where the stations disclose themselves the line has to be sought for, and the sight of a train speeding along the level—the one thing in a hurry here unless we count the breeze which stirs the heather—is but a pleasant reminder that we at least are careless of time. *Suave mari magno*—as Lucretius said long ago with quite unnecessary brutality. There is no more restful scene on which the eye of man can rest than the Vale of Hope as seen from the summit of Win Hill.



The Summit, Win Hill.

Win Hill has had its poet in Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn Law Rhymer of Sheffield, who loved a country walk as sincerely as he hated the Corn Laws and the Tories.

> " To bathe with married waves their monarch's feet
> See where the Ashop and the Derwent haste,
> And how he rears him from the vale, complete
> In all his time-touched majesty, embraced
> By the blue, bright blue heavens; his proud brow graced
> With that stone diadem which Nature made
> Ages before her practised hand had graced
> With living gems the bluebell haunted shade
> Or, high in lucid air, her wind-swift wings displayed."

And then, oddly enough, Elliott breaks out into praise of "old ale," which he recommends as the best and only stimulant on which to climb :—

> " Now having drunk of jolly ale enough
> To climb Win Hill is worth ambition—yea,
> Ambition, e'en if made of jolly stuff,
> Should drink strong ale, or never will he say
> To rival climbers, 'Follow on my way!'
> Old ale and jolly, be it dark or pale,
> Drink like a toper, be thou green or gray!
> Drink oft and long, or try to climb and fail!
> If thou would'st climb Win Hill, drink old and jolly ale!"

This is quite an unlooked-for trait in the dour old Corn Law Rhymer, though it makes us suspect that he was not much of a mountain climber, if he had thus to drink himself to the starting point. And the suspicion is confirmed by another passage in a poem called *Noon on Great Kinder* where he says :—

> " Mountains! ye awe and tire me. Fare ye well!
> And let the tempests love ye!"

That is scarcely the language of one who really loves the hills! Yet no man, we are assured, was ever happier than this Sheffield iron-master in a green lane. Elliott, however, never quite recovered from the "savaging" which Jeffrey administered to his early poems. "The disappointment of my premature

poetical hopes," he once sadly confessed, "brought a blight with it, from which my mind never recovered. For many years I was as mute as a moulting bird, and when the power of song returned it was without the energy, self-confidence and freedom which happier minstrels among my contemporaries manifested."

It is an easy and obvious descent to the little hamlet of Brough, passing by the side of Aston Hall—now a farm house—once the residence of the restless Balguys, who subsequently migrated to Hope Hall, to Rowlee in the Woodlands, and to Derwent Hall. Brough itself, standing at the junction of the Bradwell and the Noe, is a place of but few houses. A corn mill has stood here by the bridge since the days of Edward III., when the Strelleys held it on condition that they attended the king on horseback, carrying a heron falcon, whenever he came to Derbyshire. Happily the mill wheel still goes round. But Brough's chief point of interest lies in the fork of the two streams behind the mill, where the old Roman camp of Anavio stood, the focus of all the Roman roads in north Derbyshire. The field was partially uncovered in the summer of 1903, and the searchers were enabled to trace the outer walls of a camp about 285 ft. by 340 ft., in shape a rectangular oblong with rounded corners. The walls were six feet thick, with gritstone facings to an interior mass of rubble. The gateways were in the middle of the four sides, and in the western corner was a tower. The usual Prætorium, 60 ft. by 85 ft., lay in the centre of the camp, and contained a sunken cellar, built into the wall of which was a fragment of an inscribed slab, dated about A.D. 158. There were also found a number of chiselled stones and altars, parts of pillars, and an inscription recording the presence here of the First Cohort of the Aquitani in the reign of Antoninus Pius and the governorship of Julius Verus. The cellar has been left exposed. Standing by its side, one sees what an admirable station Anavio must have made, from the Roman point of view, in days when nothing was to be feared from artillery. It

rested on slightly rising ground commanding views over the Vale of Hope and up Bradwell Dale, and no enemy could conceal his approach from a vigilant garrison. The two streams afforded additional protection, and the bank of the Noe on the north side of the camp forms a sheer cliff some twenty feet in height.

From Brough it is only a mile to Hope, a pleasantly situated village, whose old Hall is now an inn. The church, whose dumpy spire is a conspicuous landmark, has been despitefully used, but it has several interesting features—its huge grotesque gargoyles on the south side, the fine oak pew-heads, which have been set up against the chancel walls as though it were a museum, the chamber, or parvise, over the south porch, the schoolmaster's chair, with its motto, *Ex torto ligno non fit Mercurius*, the grim paintings of grim patriarchs, and a gorgeous oak hymn-board with gold knobs, which used to hang in the chancel sixty years ago. This has, on one side, a picture of David playing the harp; on the other are partitions for displaying the numbers of the hymns. In the chancel is a pleasing little brass to Henry Balguy, of Hope Hall, with the date 1685 and the inscription :—

> "*A mundo ablactans oculos tamen ipse reflecto*
> *Sperno, flens vitiis, lene sopore cado.*"

A quaint translation of this still quainter Latin is also given :—

> "Wained from the world upon it yet I peepe,
> Disdaine it, weepe for sinne and sweetly sleepe."

Henry Balguy himself is shown in knee-breeches and doublet. He wears a conical hat, and holds a pen in one hand and a book in the other.

In Hope church it used to be the custom at the publication of banns and at marriages for the clerk to call out, "GOD speed the couple well." In the churchyard lie the victims of a moorland tragedy. During the winter of 1674 a grazier, named Barber, and his maid-servant were lost in the snow on the moors while on their way to Ireland. The bodies

remained undiscovered from January to May; then the Coroner ordered that they should be buried on the spot. Thirty years afterwards they were uncovered and "exposed for a sight" for twenty more years, well preserved by the peaty soil. They were seen and described in 1716 by a Chesterfield doctor, but at last, when public opinion tardily awoke to the scandal of the thing, the remains were brought down to the valley and buried in Hope churchyard. Even then curiosity does not seem to have been satisfied, for some years later the

Mam Tor.

grave was opened again. But by that time the bodies were entirely consumed.

From Hope it is a long circuitous walk of five miles to Edale, and the train is temptingly convenient. The road quits the Vale of Hope, follows the course of the little river Noe through the gap between Lose Hill and Win Hill, and then enters the valley of Edale, with the fine ridge from Lose Hill to Mam Tor high above on the left hand. Edale itself is an inconsequential little village, containing nothing of importance. The font of its old church may be seen in the

burial ground, serving the decorative purpose of a flower vase. At the cross-roads below the village a square sign-post is worth noting, set on a stone shaft about four feet high. The directions are to Hope, Grindsbrook, Tidswell and Chapel. Grindsbrook is the name of the stream which here flows down into the Noe, and seems also to have been the name of the hamlet itself before it grew into the village of Edale. Our way lies up to the summit of Mam Tor, and the pleasantest path thereto is to quit the main road just beyond the sign-post and turn to the left through a gate. Passing a farm-house, we leave the smooth track and take a rough path through the fields, following this up to a wooden shanty, which has long been conspicuous on the hill side, and then up to a well-cropped passage between two great projecting mounds. This runs out into a zig-zag road, and a footpath thence on the left, when the col is reached, leads steeply up to the top of Mam Tor. The prospect is magnificent, and at first it is hard to say whether this or the view from Win Hill is the grander. The entire vale of Edale is spread out before us, a large valley swelling up on every side to the mountains, and containing within itself a number of smaller valleys, each with its brook and its steep hill sides, but all running down in a southerly direction from the southern face of the great Kinderscout Moss. On the entire northern and western sides of Edale there is no exit save by cart tracks, and even these do not cross the big mountains, but stop when they reach the highest farmsteads, themselves few and scattered. The best known foot track is that which follows the course of the Noe to Jacob's Ladder, and climbs up to Edale Cross and Stony Ford below Kinderlow End, thence branching down through Oaken Clough to Hayfield, or continuing ahead to White Brow and the Leygate Moor. The main road by which we entered Edale and the zig-zag that runs up out of the dale into the Castleton and Chapel road are the only road outlets. There is a sense of remoteness, therefore, as one looks down upon

Edale, inconsistent with its cultivated fields, though the railway has taken away its original aspect of complete seclusion. When I saw it the level fields near the village were dotted with the white tents of a military camp, where two or three militia battalions were undergoing their annual training. The trimness of the white lines pleased the eye and the note of the bugle came soaring up—one of the few sounds which penetrated from the valley.

Changing our view-point on the little plateau which forms the summit of Mam Tor, we look westward to Rushup Edge, really a continuation of the Mam Tor and Lose Hill ridge on which we are standing, but shorn of their dignity and height. It protects the flank of the new road from Castleton to Chapel —the one which passes Ford Hall and Slack Hall—while a mile to the south we see the older road that leads through Sparrowpit. The country between them is mainly barren pasture, stretching away for miles towards Peak Forest and Buxton, where the smoke from the distant lime-kilns dims the far horizon. This older road quitted Castleton by the Winnats, seen at our feet in the shape of a huge yawning gap in the limestone—true Wind-gates where Boreas might dwell and crack his lips with blowing. Another change of view-point and we look down upon Castleton itself, with its shell of a castle perched on the rock by its side and the Vale of Hope gloriously spread before us. Nor must we forget the sharp razor-like ridge that runs north-east from where we stand to Black Tor and Lose Hill, and on to Win Hill, with a broad gap between. Nevertheless, all things considered, the prospect from Mam Tor falls short of that from Win Hill, whose outlook over the Vale of Hope is more complete, while Edale cannot compare in beauty with the dales of the Ashop, Derwent, and Lady Bower. Its one point of superiority, perhaps, is the view over Castleton and the ridge towards Lose Hill. But happy is the country side which has two such prospects within the easy compass of the most moderate walker!

As a Wonder of the Peak, Mam Tor has long ceased to count, for the phenomenon of falling stones on a mountain side is common enough. One never hears it called now the "Shivering Mountain," nor is the name explained as Maimed Tor. That was Hobbes' derivation.

> "*Quemque vocant alii corrupto nomine Mam Tor*
> *Rectius hunc clivum videor mihi dicere Maimed Tor*
> *Quod sonat Angligenis clivus mutilatus, et ipse*
> *Mons, nomen magna mutilatus parte fatetur.*"

To such barbarities of diction is one reduced when one tries to turn etymology into hexameters. The old cause of wonder was that the mountain continually shivered its sides away and yet its shadow never grew less.

CHAPTER XIV

ELDON HOLE AND CASTLETON

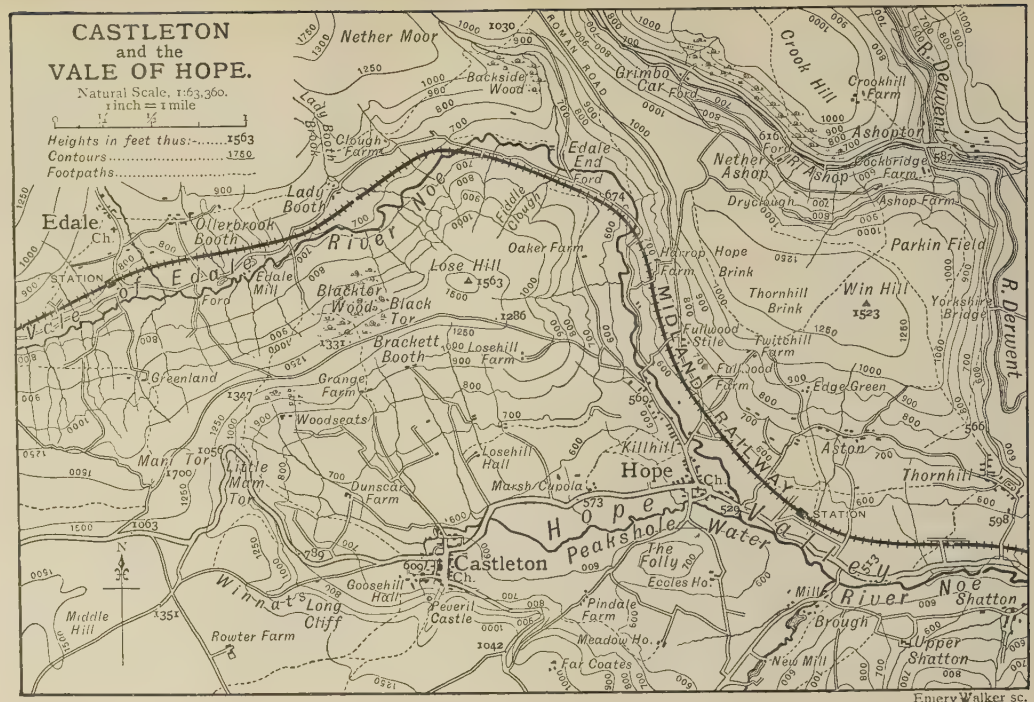
BEFORE we make our way to Castleton let us visit that most neglected of all the Wonders of the Peak, Eldon Hole. Descending from the summit of Mam Tor into the main road, which has come winding up out of Castleton round Little Mam Tor, we cross to the older road and turn rightwards along the uninteresting uplands which stretch away from the foot of Rushup Edge. In a mile and a half a by-lane on the left hand enters the road at an acute angle, and the high ground just beyond it is the lower slope of Eldon Hill. Eldon Hole, however, lies on the southern side of the hill, and to reach it one must either go up the by-road for a little way, and then keep round for a long mile to the right, or continue along the main road and take a footpath on the left round the other side of the slope. I took the former way, disturbing a great company of rooks which had settled near one of the round cattle ponds in the pastures, and when, a quarter of an hour later, I reached the Hole, I found them holding their evening Parliament on the stone wall which has been built around it. This was evidently one of their favourite gathering places, and they flew off in dudgeon, settling again a hundred yards away and stationing vedettes to watch me, when I showed no inclination to move. The Hole has no terror for the rooks. Yet it is a fearsome place—a great chasm in the hill side, thirty-four yards long and varying in width from a few

feet to some half-a-dozen yards. At the upper and wider end the face of the Hole is jagged and uneven; longitudinally, its sides descend sheer and precipitous, though its outline is nowhere sharply defined. Nettles and lichens, a few ferns and much ivy cling to the upper surface of this yawning abyss, and even one or two small trees maintain a shivering existence in crevices near the top. I flung down—who can resist the temptation?—a big stone from the wall, which struck from side to side in its descent, reverberating loudly and stampeding the few horses which were grazing close by. Nor was that the only result. For the din brought up in wild alarm a score or more of jackdaws who make the Hole their home, and their terrified nestlings below raised such an agitated cheeping as I have never heard before. None but black-plumaged birds flew up into the light.

Eldon Hole gave our ancestors the creeps. See, for example, what Charles Cotton says of it, though no one would associate jumpy nerves with the owner of Beresford Hall:—

> "A formidable scissure gapes so wide,
> Steep, black and full of horrors that who dare
> Look down into the chasm, and keep his hair
> From lifting off his hat, either has none
> Or, for more modish curls, cashiers his own.
> It were injurious, I must confess,
> By mine to measure braver courages,
> But, when I peep into it, I must declare
> My heart still beats and eyes with horror stare;
> And he that standing on the brink of Hell,
> Can carry it so unconcerned and well
> As to betray no fear, is certainly
> A better Christian or a worse than I."

No doubt Cotton had been reading his Hobbes, who gives an admirable mock-heroic account of his visit to Eldon Hole, and describes how he too rolled down stones, and how they fell down and down to the lowest depths of Hell, and made poor Sisyphus grumble at the extra trouble to which he was


CASTLETON
and the
VALE OF HOPE.
Natural Scale, 1:63,360.
1 inch = 1 mile
Heights in feet thus:-.....1563
Contours.....1750
Footpaths.....
Nether Moor
Backside Wood
Lady Booth Brook
Clough Farm
Lady Booth
Ollerbrook Booth
Edale Ch.
STATION
Edale Mill
Ford
Blackley Wood
Black Tor
Brackett Booth
Losehill Farm
Greenland
Grange Farm
Woodseats
Man Tor
Little Man Tor
Dunscar Farm
Losehill Hall
Marsh Cupola
Killhill
Hope Ch.
Castleton Ch.
Gobsehill Hall
Peveril Castle
Winnat's Long Cliff
Middle Hill
Rowter Farm
Pindale Farm
Meadow Ho.
Far Coates
Edale End Ford
Fiddle Clough
Oaker Farm
Lose Hill 1563
Roman Road
Grimbo Car Ford
Crook Hill
Crookhill Farm
R. Derwent
Ashopton
Nether Ashop
Ashop Bridge
Lockbridge Farm
Ashop Farm
Drychough
Parkin Field
Hagrop Farm
Hope Brink
Thornhill Brink
Win Hill 1523
Yorkshire Bridge
Fullwood Stile
Twitchill Farm
Fullwood Farm
Edge Green
Midland Railway
Aston
Thornhill
Hope Station
The Folly
Eccles Ho.
Peakshole Water
Mill Brough
River Noe
Shatton
Upper Shatton
New Mill
Emery Walker sc.

being put. These stones he had evidently to pick up for himself, for then there was no convenient wall to pillage,

"*At lapides toto sparsos conquirimus agro.*"

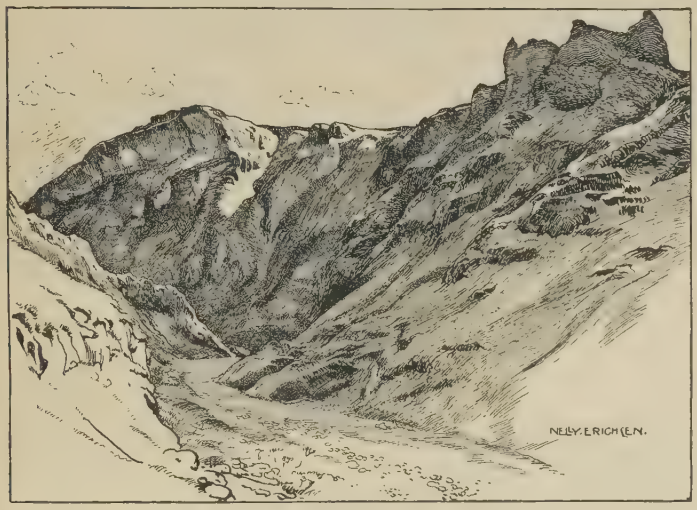
Hobbes tells the story of how the Earl of Leicester—Elizabeth's Earl—when visiting the Hole, had an unfortunate native lowered to the full extent of the available rope, two hundred ells, and the poor wretch was drawn up stark, staring mad, and died eight days later. As to its depth Cotton says :—

"How deep this gulph does travel under ground,
Though there have been attempts, was never found ;
But I myself with half the Peak surrounded
Eight hundred, fourscore and four yards have sounded."

But no proper investigation was made, nor is there record of any until so late as 1770, when bottom was found at the depth of sixty-two yards. A century later the Hole was carefully examined and a passage discovered, leading downwards for sixty-four feet into a great cavern, seventy feet high and a hundred feet wide. This, according to the report of the most recent investigators, is shaped like a bee-hive and is finely encrusted with stalactites and stalagmites. Out of this inner cavern there is no exit of any kind, and thus the delightful story of the goose which was seen to fly down Eldon Hole and emerge from the Peak Cavern at Castleton without a single feather on its back, must reluctantly be dismissed as a fable. When one thinks of the superstitious awe with which Eldon Hole was regarded for long centuries one cannot but admire the courage of the old British chieftain, whose bones lie buried in the tumulus up above on the top of Eldon Hill. Possibly the Tartarus of his mythology did not gape underground. Now that Eldon Hole has proved to be fathomable, the countryside has recovered its spirits.

Rejoining the high road again, we retrace our steps towards Castleton, and where the road forks—just beyond where we entered it on descending from Mam Tor—we turn to the right

down the Winnats, a natural defile in the limestone cliffs which deservedly ranks high among the most picturesque spots of Derbyshire. In ancient days this was the high road; now wheeled traffic has practically ceased, and the surface is grass-grown. On either hand the cliffs tower up in fantastic outline, rising in one or two places to the height of three hundred feet, wholly precipitous in parts, in others sheer for half their fall and then sloping down to the roadway in grassy stretches.



The Winnats, Castleton.

The beauty of the Winnats is greatly enhanced by the sharp descent of the road and its graceful bend midway, and it is the beauty of the scene, not its terrors, which strikes the modern eye. Hutchinson's description—in 1809—of the pass as "awful and terrific," and of the "towering cliffs which seem almost to touch the clouds and put the traveller in alarm, fearful that some loosened fragment may crash him to atoms," only raises a smile. We have greater confidence in the stability of Nature's rocks than had our grandfathers, and the

confidence is not misplaced. Warner, writing in 1802, was nearer the modern point of view when he said, "Happy was the imagination which first suggested its name, the gates or portals of the winds, since wild as these sons of the Tempest are, the massive rocks which Nature here presents seem to promise a barrier sufficiently strong to control their maddest fury." Surely the cave on Windy Knoll Quarry at the top of the Winnats would have made a splendid home for Aeolus :—

"*Hic vasto rex Aeolus antro*
Luctantes ventos tempestatesque sonoras
Imperio premit ac vinclis ac carcere frenat."

Yes, and if the day be chill you can hear the winds, as Virgil said, chafe and fret round their prison house in sullen indignation, and make the mountain murmur.

There was a murder in the Winnats long ago. In 1768 a runaway pair, to whom tradition has given the names of Henry and Clara, were married at the extra-parochial chapel of Peak Forest, a sort of minor Gretna Green. While on their way to Castleton they were seized by five miners in the Winnats, dragged to a barn and murdered. Juliet was killed by a pickaxe; Romeo had his throat cut; and the bodies were hidden in a cave. Their horses were found at Sparrowpit and taken to Chatsworth, but were never claimed, and the saddles were long preserved there. The murderers were punished not by human justice but by divine. One is said to have broken his neck at the Winnats; a second was crushed by a fall of stone; a third committed suicide; a fourth died mad, and the fifth made a death bed confession. The bodies of the victims were not found for ten years. Such is the story, but I confess I am sceptical. It inspired a clergyman, the Rev. A. G. Jewitt, to compose in 1815 an amazingly doggerel ballad which concludes as follows :

"Christians, I have told my ditty,
If you shudder not with fear,
If your breasts can glow with pity,
Can you now withhold a tear?"

At the foot of the Winnats is the Speedwell or Navigation Mine, partly natural, partly artificial, for it was opened by the lead miners, and some unfortunate speculators spent £14,000 in the vain hope of finding rich veins. It is a weird spot, for one begins by descending more than a hundred steps and embarks on a boat to be ferried nearly half a mile along a subterranean stream into the heart of the mountain. This leads into an imposing cavern, where the stream plunges down with a roar into the "Bottomless Pit" and the roof is far out of sight. The "Bottomless Pit" is, as a matter of fact, about ninety feet deep, while the roof is estimated to be about four hundred feet high. Not far from the Speedwell is the Blue John Cavern, from which the famous Blue John spar is obtained, known to mineralogists as amethystine or topazine fluor. This, too, has its spacious chambers and marvellous fissures—and not long since a roped party climbed a hundred and thirty feet up one of these vertical clefts, and human eyes, probably for the first time, gazed upon its stalagmite walls. Close by is the Odin Mine, reputed to be the oldest lead mine in Derbyshire, and still worked as lately as 1830. But let us get down to Castleton and have a look at the famous Peak or Devil's Cavern. The entrance is magnificent, for it is approached by a pathway between two tall converging cliffs. One of these forms the precipitous side of the hill on which is perched the castle, whence the town takes its name. It rises sheer to the height of two hundred and sixty-one feet, the home of a colony of jackdaws—wise birds which nest in inaccessible places. The cliff is well wooded with dwarf trees clinging to its face, and the cavern itself is a vast natural archway at the foot of the massive cliff that confronts us as we turn the corner. A brook flows out of the cavern mouth, whose width, depth and height are such that there is ample room within it for an ancient twine manufactory or rope-walk, which Gilpin mentions when he visited the place in 1772. The cavern extends 2,250 feet into the heart of the mountain, and was quite too

much for the nerves of the Prebendary. "A combination of more horrid ideas," he wrote, "is rarely found than this place affords, and, at last, the idea growing too infernal, we were glad to return." I suspect it was not alone the infernality of the idea which caused Gilpin to turn back, for in 1772, at the further end of the rope-walk, the roof of the cavern almost touched the floor. James Ferguson, who visited the cavern in the same year, describes his experience thus in one long, breathless, excited sentence :—

"Toward the further end from the entrance, the roof comes down with a gradual slope to about two feet from the surface of a water fourteen yards across the rock, in that place, forming a kind of arch, under which I was pushed by my guide across the water in a long oval tub, as I lay on my back in the straw with a candle in my hand and was for the greater part of the way on the river so near the arched roof that it touched my hat, if I raised my head but two inches from the straw on which I lay in the tub (called the boat) which I believe was not above a foot in depth."

That, we fancy, is why the Prebend turned back; that is the secret of the "idea growing too infernal." He was afraid for his dignity and his clothes. Yet Hobbes had crawled in on all fours :—

"*Erecto rursum, rursum mox corpore prono*
Pergimus, alterna pecudes hominesque figura."

Byron too placed on record his recollections of the visit he made to the Peak Cavern with Mary Chaworth, describing how they had to cower in the boat while "the ferryman, a sort of Charon," waded at the stern and pushed it along. "The companion of my transit," he wrote, "was M. A. C., with whom I had been long in love and never told it, though she had discovered it without. I recollect my sensations, but cannot describe them, and it is as well." Visitors, half a century ago, might make arrangements with the Parish Clerk and the Castleton choir to sing for them in the cavern from a high ledge near the roof; nowadays there is no demand on their services.

But my interest in caves is soon exhausted, and one

stalagmite is to me as another stalagmite. The glory of the Peak Cavern is its approach—the great cliffs, the chattering jackdaws, the rounded arch with its little river and the ghostly looking rope-walk. It would serve very well for an entrance to the underworld if we could imagine so innocent looking a brook was the "irremeable wave" of Styx.

Castleton should be given a wide berth on a Saturday or Sunday in the summer months. On those days it overflows with the tripper, for whom it lays itself out to provide, and its streets are apt to be uproarious until the last brakes have gone singing down the vale. Its main thoroughfares are commonplace, but the cottages on the higher level are picturesque and unspoilt. Castleton retains one interesting local custom, for May 29th, or Oakapple Day, is still honoured in a curious way. A great garland of wild flowers is made, shaped like a bell on a frame, and is carried round the town by a man on horseback, who wears it upon his head, covering his face. He plays Charles II.; the part of the Queen who rides beside him is taken by a youth, dressed in a lady's riding habit and veil. Twenty girls dance the Morris dance before them as they ride through the town to the accompaniment of "plenty of brass bands." One can conceive the din! Then the garland is taken to the church and slung up by a pulley to a parapet of the tower, where it is left to wither. It is accounted a great honour to bear the garland, and the privilege has been exercised by the same man for the last twenty years.

In the church, which is of no particular interest, is the monument of the Rev. Edward Bagshawe, who from 1723 to 1769 was vicar of Castleton. It tells us that he was "a man whose chief delight was in the service of his Master, a sound scholar, a tender and affectionate husband, a kind and indulgent parent, a lover of peace and quietness, who is gone to that place where he now enjoys the due reward of all his labours." Castleton was not a rich living in early Georgian days. It was valued at £40, but the lead tithes varied very much. Every

twentieth dish of lead ore was supposed to be set aside for the parson, but he really only got one in sixty, the remaining two-thirds going into the pocket of the Bishop of Chester. Bagshawe kept a journal which shows that he never received more than £40, and some years had practically no income at all, if the mines were not working. He had begun life with a good private fortune, but a friend in London had induced him to invest it all in the South Sea Bubble, and every penny of it was lost. The journal is full of curious and interesting details respecting Castleton prices. In 1748, for example, Bohea tea was eight shillings a pound; chickens were threepence each, tobacco a penny an ounce. A shoulder of mutton could be bought for fifteenpence, a forequarter of lamb for eighteen, and a codshead from Sheffield—none too fresh, probably—cost the same. The journal chronicles the humdrum round of the vicar's daily life; it tells us of his eldest son Harry, apprenticed to a tradesman in Leeds, and of his wife making up a parcel of four tongues and four pots of potted beef as a small present for Hal's master. It tells also of another parcel arriving at Castleton from Leeds, which on being opened was found to contain "a blue China cotton gown." This was Hal's present to "his mamma."

But if the church be dull, Castleton is more than compensated by its romantic castle, perched on the top of the Castle Hill. Compared with the heights around it, by which, indeed, it is entirely dominated and dwarfed when one stands upon its summit, the Castle Hill is of little distinction. Its steepest and most precipitous face, the western, is only two hundred and sixty feet high, and its crest, an irregular sloping plateau, is of insignificant size. Yet it manages to look impressive from almost every view point below, and the old grey ruin on the top never fails to fascinate the eye. The hill was well chosen as a place of strength. On the west side—the cliff which faced us at the entrance to Peak Cavern—it is absolutely inaccessible; on the east and south sides it looks down upon a narrow

ravine called Cave Dale, a sort of miniature Winnats, quite unscalable for purposes of attack. The only possible approach was on the north, where a handful of defenders could repel the assault of hundreds. Even now the ruin is reached by a zig-zag path on account of the steepness of the northern face. The bailey or castle yard is about an acre and a quarter in extent and is surrounded by a massive wall. The entrance was at the north-east corner; two square towers stood at the east and west

The Peak Castle and Cavern, Castleton.

angles of the north wall, and the keep occupied the north-west corner. All are in ruins, yet sufficient is left to enable one to form a good idea of the old Castle of the Peak. The keep was a quadrangular building, almost square, some twenty-one by nineteen feet, with walls eight feet in thickness and sixty feet in height. Now a mere shell, it is supposed to have consisted of two rooms, the lower of which was entered from the upper by a staircase, while access to the upper was gained by an outside flight of steps. No other remains of buildings have been found

in the castle yard, and it is tolerably certain that this keep was never intended as a regular place of residence. Nor was it the original keep of William Peveril, who built a castle here in 1068, but the handiwork of Henry II. in 1176–7. That King had been in Castleton twenty years before, for in 1157 he here received the submission of Malcolm, King of Scotland, and celebrated the occasion by broaching wine to the value of seventy-two Plantagenet shillings. What Peveril's castle was like, no one knows, but the probabilities are that it was only a place of defence and refuge, and a convenient centre for hunting in the Forest of the Peak. Peveril was a natural son of William the Conqueror, who bestowed upon him a large number of Derbyshire manors. These estates, however, remained in his family less than a century, his grandson being deprived of them by Henry II. for poisoning the Earl of Chester, whose wife was his paramour.

Naturally enough, the Castleton people make great play with Sir Walter Scott's romance of *Peveril of the Peak*. One sees it everywhere until the endless iteration tires. That is all in the way of business, no doubt, and to be mentioned by Scott is secure immortality. Yet, if the truth be told, Castleton plays a very unimportant part in *Peveril of the Peak*. Sir Walter was attracted by the romantic name and the romantic situation in which the Norman lord had built his lair, "choosing his nest on the principle in which an eagle selects her eyrie and building it in such a fashion as if he had intended it, as an Irishman said of the Martello towers, for the sole purpose of puzzling posterity." And that is all the reference! The Wizard of the North, I fancy, did not stay long in Derbyshire, and I can find no reasonable identification either of Martindale Castle, where his Peveril lived, or of Moultrassie Hall, two miles away, the home of the Bridgenorths, or of the village of Martindale-Moultrassie, whose position is described as "considerably to the eastward of both Castle and Hall, at about an equal distance from both, so that supposing a line drawn

from the one manor-house to the other to be the base of a triangle, the village would have occupied the salient angle." Such minuteness of direction certainly looks as if Scott had two specific Derbyshire houses in his mind, but which can they be? Martindale Castle was almost a ruin in the story, with only one wing standing, the rest having been battered down by Cromwell in person during the Civil Wars. That suggests Wingfield—the only place of importance in Derbyshire which stood a regular siege, though Cromwell himself was never near it. But if so, where was Moultrassie Hall and where the village? Haddon Hall has no claim to be identified with Martindale Castle—for Haddon was not a castle, never stood a siege, and has never been in ruins. The only mention of Haddon in *Peveril of the Peak* occurs in a very misleading and entirely inaccurate note, where Scott says that the mistress of the house could sit in her pew in the chapel, open "a scuttle" in the wall, and see that the cooks were not idling in the kitchen. As a matter of fact, there were several walls and a whole great quadrangle between chapel and kitchen. We come to the conclusion, therefore, that Martindale Castle is a sort of blend of Wingfield and Haddon, and that Sir Walter's topography is entirely of his own imagining. What is really much more interesting is the story which Lockhart tells of Scott himself being nicknamed "Peveril of the Peak" by an Edinburgh lawyer wit, who was of ample girth. "Here comes Peveril of the Peak," he said one day as Scott approached. This raised a general laugh, for the reference to Scott's "tall, conical, white head" was obvious. "Better be Peveril of the Peak," retorted Scott with good humour, "than Peter of the Paunch." But the nickname pleased him, and in writing to Lockhart and his friends he often signed himself Peveril of the Peak.

CHAPTER XV

TIDESWELL, WORMHILL, AND CHEE DALE

From Castleton to Tideswell the shortest route lies up the hill to the left of the Castle and then over the uplands by a little frequented road. A pleasanter but considerably longer way is to go down the valley by the high road to Hope with the tiny brook, the Peakshole Water, on our right hand, until, just beyond Hope, it falls into the Noe from Edale. Then by the mill at Brough we turn up Bradwell Dale, which looked so pleasant from the top of Win Hill, with a good line of hills on the left hand. Just before we reach Bradwell a road branches off to the right towards the hamlet of Small Dale. This is the Batham Gate, whose further extremity we saw between Dove Holes and Buxton. Locally, it is known as Gore Lane, from the dead men's bones which have been found there, telling no tales, but suggesting murder and sudden death. Tradition speaks of a Saxon chief, named Edwin, slain in battle, and there is an "Edan Tree"—a possible corruption of Edwin—close at hand.

Bradwell itself is not an attractive village; its stone houses have been flung together in haphazard and untidy clusters. It once was a lead mining centre, and lead works are still in operation, but the ore comes not from the veins of the native hills which have been looking down upon us, since we left the Vale of Hope, but from Spain. The church dates no further back than 1868, and is remarkable only for its plainness.

Bradwell has its cavern, which would be as famous as those at Castleton if it did not lie so far off the beaten track, for its crystallisations and stalactites are reputed to be finer than any in the county. This is Bagshawe's Cavern, so called because the land, in which it was discovered by some lead-miners a century ago, belonged to Sir William Bagshawe of Wormhill, and the grottoes and chambers received their fantastic and often ridiculous titles from Lady Bagshawe. To me, however, by far the most interesting thing near Bradwell is Hazelbadge Hall, a farmhouse a mile out of the town at the further end of Bradwell Dale—where the road is carried through a not very picturesque limestone defile. Hazelbadge Hall was one of the many manor houses belonging to the great family of Vernon, whose arms, surmounted by a visored helmet, with the date 1549, are to be seen sculptured in stone in the white-washed gable which faces the road. Below are two fine windows with handsome stone mullions, one above the other. The hall is now a well-tended farmhouse.

We are still on rising ground, with the ridge of Black Knoll on the left. This soon yields to the curve of Hucklow Edge, a continuation of Eyam Edge, which bends at right angles above the cross-roads a mile further on. Little Hucklow lies a quarter of a mile off on our right, and Great Hucklow is a mile distant below the hill on the left, neither village now possessing importance. Then at length we emerge upon the broad plateau of the High Peak and, leaving the road to Eyam on our left, go on for a long mile to Lane Head, a glorious position for cross-roads. Away to left and right stretches the big highway from Sparrowpit and Peak Forest to Wardlow Mires, Stony Middleton, and Calver. It comes sweeping down from Peak Forest, dead straight for the mile we have it in view and with an easy descent which offers a temptation that no cyclist or motorist could resist but for the cross-roads which counsel prudence. Hucklow Edge rises up nobly behind us ; a by-path to Litton climbs the little brow to

the left of our road to Tideswell; and at the side of the inn another by-road gives you the direct line for Castleton.

The pinnacles of Tideswell church—two-thirds of a mile away—are in view as we turn towards this pleasant and ancient town. Markets have been held here since 1250, and when the neighbouring Forest was in its glory the Kings of England used to visit Tideswell for the hunting. They often came on hither from Clipston in Sherwood Forest, travelling by way of Dronfield. At least that was the route which Edward I. once took, and from Tideswell went on to Chapel and Macclesfield, and then back to Clipston by way of Ashford, Chesterfield, and Langwith. There was a "King's larder" at Tideswell, and sundry families of note had houses in the district. At Wheston Hall, where is a fine fourteenth-century roadside cross, the Charltons dwelt; at Litton were the Lyttons and the Fords; and in Tideswell church are memorials of the Foljambes, the Meverills, and the De Bowers. A number of offices and dignities attached to the Forest; when it was disafforested the families which held these dignities removed elsewhither.

The books do not speak very kindly of Tideswell. Hutchinson (1809) declares that "no attraction whatever could be found" there, and says, "the town is principally composed of poor mean houses." Rhodes (1818), usually the most indulgent of critics, says, "the houses are low, irregularly situated and ill-built, and there is altogether an air of poverty and meanness about it, with a want of cleanliness and comfort in its general appearance." Certainly the little town has no romantic prettiness—it is perched in a shallow fold of the bleak uplands—but its streets are spacious and, whatever they were three-quarters of a century ago, their cleanliness is now beyond cavil. And Tideswell church is glorious. The Cathedral of the Peak it is called, and well deserves the name. The present building dates mainly from about the middle of the fourteenth century, and is cruciform in shape, the south transept containing tombs of the Lyttons and the De Bowers,

and the north being the old chantry of the Guild of St. Mary of Tideswell. But it is the chancel which draws all eyes, and has been well described as "one gallery of light and beauty." Norbury alone among the Derbyshire churches equals it: Norbury alone surpasses it in charm. The square-headed decorated windows are fine examples of their kind; there is a curious narrow sacristy behind the stone reredos; and the

Tideswell Church.

noble east window was given by the Foljambes of the nineteenth century in memory of their ancestor of the fourteenth, who founded the chancel and now lies within the altar rails. The fine brass of Bishop Pursglove, the somewhat compliant Prior of Gisburn Priory who surrendered his house to King Henry in 1540, but refused to take the Oath of Supremacy in 1559, is worth notice. He was Tideswell-born and the founder of the local Grammar School. But far more interesting than Robert Pursglove is the old fighting knight, whose stone effigy you may see through the openings in the sides

of his table tomb in the chancel. The brasses inlet in the smooth and glossy marble and the inscribed brass riband tell you that this was Sampson Meverill, Knight Constable of England, who fought with John Montague Earl of Salisbury, as "a captain of diverse worshipful places in France," and had served under John Duke of Bedford in the Hundred Years' War. He was present at eleven great battles in two years, and won knighthood from the Duke's hands at St. Luce. "Devoutly of your charity," he begs you, "sayth a Pater Noster with an Ave for all Xtian soules and especially for the soule of him whose bones resten under this stone." It were surely churlish to refuse.

In the churchyard are the tombs of William Newton, "the Minstrel of the Peak," of whom we shall have more to say later, and of Tideswell's chief eccentric celebrity, one Samuel Slack, who in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was the most popular bass singer in England. When a young man, he competed for a post in a college choir at Cambridge, and sang Purcell's famous air, "They that go down to the sea in ships." The precentor immediately rose and said to the other candidates, "Gentlemen, I now leave it with you whether anyone will sing after what you have just heard." They took the hint and withdrew. Not long afterwards, Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire interested herself in Slack and placed him under the tuition of Spofforth, the chief singing-master of the day. He improved so much that he took London by storm, and for many years sang principal bass at all the great musical festivals. So powerful was his voice that on one occasion, when pursued by a bull, he uttered a loud bellow which terrified the animal and put him to flight! Slack does not seem to have acquired much polish from his association with educated people. For when, after singing before George III. at Windsor Castle, he was told that his Majesty had been pleased with his voice, Slack replied in his native dialect, "Oh, he were pleased, were he? I thowt I could do 't." In fact,

to quote a contemporary writer, Slack "liked low society," and made no effort towards self-improvement. When he retired into private life, he returned to his native village of Tideswell and became the ruling spirit of the local Catch and Glee Club. We get a glimpse of him in 1809, when Hutchinson says that on the evening he happened to be in Tideswell it was the monthly meeting of the club at the George Inn. "Mr. Slack," he says, "and other performers greatly amused the amateurs who had numerously attended from the adjacent country," and Hutchinson himself was "agreeably entertained." No doubt, Slack sang his favourite, "Life's a bumper, filled by Fate," as he does in the lithograph by Thomas from a painting by Potts, which is often met with in Derbyshire. It depicts six singers in Hogarthian attitudes, with glasses, jugs, and pipes, and shows Slack and Chadwick of Hayfield singing lustily from the same book. Slack died in 1822 at the age of sixty-five, but no stone was raised over his grave until 1831, when a memorial was put up at the expense of the amateur members of the Barlow Choir, assisted by some outside contributions. Sixty years later, this memorial had fallen into disrepair, and was restored from a fund subscribed for the purpose by the readers of the *Sheffield Weekly Independent.*

Whether the Tideswell Catch and Glee Club long survived the extinction of its bright particular star, we do not know. But there was clearly a marked taste for music in the town, for in 1826 a Tideswell Music Band was in existence, consisting of six clarinets, two flutes, three bassoons, one serpent, two trumpets, two trombones, two French horns, one bugle, and one double-drum—twenty performers in all. Some of the rules of this band are rather interesting. There were three practices a week; any member who came half-an-hour late was fined a penny, and if he did not come at all, twopence. A player who did not "attend immediately" to the waving baton of the leader paid a penny; the owner of a dirty instrument paid threepence; and the heaviest fine of all was

sixpence—of which sum any member was to be mulcted if he was "in an intoxicated state during the time of meeting." Excellent rules! They who framed them took their music seriously, and were determined the band should be a credit to the town. And until the last few years the Tideswell Band was in great request all over North Derbyshire whenever festivities were afoot.

Tideswell has had its poet—a certain Mr. Beebe Eyre, who, in 1854, was awarded £50 out of the Queen's Royal Bounty. This was upon the recommendation of the easy-going Lord Palmerston, who never liked to refuse a friend a favour. Eyre wrote verse which for sheer bathos could hardly be matched from the works of the Poet Close. Take, for example, his invocation to Tideswell:—

> "Tideswell! thou art my natal spot,
> And hence I love thee well;
> May prosperous days now be the lot
> Of all that in thee dwell!"

But his poems, as he explains in his preface, were "written in deep adversity."

Until recently it was confidently assumed that Tideswell derived its name from a well which ebbed and flowed like the tide of the sea. But the sceptic has arisen in the guise of the philologist, who tells us that the first syllable has certainly nothing to do with the tide, and that the second need not necessarily refer to a spring of water at all. Tideswell is really "Tidi's well"; Tidi being the name of a local chieftain, and "well" meaning either a spring or a paddock. There is a Tidslow near the town which beyond question means Tidi's burying place, while the name of Tidi occurs in the *Liber Vitae* of Durham and in Beda, and is also to be seen in the names Tiddeman and Tydeman. So say the philologists, Professor Skeat among the number. Those who are interested in the subject will find it fully discussed in *Notes and Queries*, Jan. to March, 1904. On the other hand, the old interpretation is

backed by a long list of references to Tideswell, from the seventeenth century downwards, where in each case the author derives the name of the village from an ebbing and flowing well. The evidence certainly looks strong, beginning with Tristram Risdon (1580—1640) who, in his *Scenery of Devon* describes as follows a sub-manor, named Tidwell, in the parish of East Budleigh. "Here is a pond or pool maintained by springs, which continually welm and boil up, not unlike that wonderful well in Derbyshire which ebbeth and floweth by just tides and hath given name to Tideswell, a market town of no mean account." The well was choked up at the end of the eighteenth century, and Pilkington, writing in 1789, says, "upon enquiry I find that it is now very imperfectly remembered by any person ; but I was informed that the well, which is now closed up, might be easily restored to its former state." Similarly, Rhodes says that "the spot where the well once was is still pointed out to the traveller who inquires for it, but it is now choked up and its ebbings and flowings have long since terminated." Nevertheless, the well can now be seen in the small garden of Craven House, by the roadside, near Town Head. A shallow brickwork basin has been made for it, banked up by a grotto of stone and with a leaden pipe, five or six feet long, thrust down into the ground. The water varies in depth about six inches in summer and winter, and is said to flow fairly regularly. Forty years ago, before the house was built, the well was in the open field. But that this was ever a Wonder of the Peak I do not believe, and pin my faith to the well at Barmoor Clough.

Sundry roads lead from Tideswell to Buxton. The one in common use leaves Tideswell by the Town End, runs almost due south by the side of Tideswell Dale towards Miller's Dale, and then turns westward till it drops to the level of the Wye. That is the most recent main road. What we may call the penultimate road follows much the same course half a mile to the west, on the other side of the intervening ridge, and

descends to the Wye by means of a terrific hill, joining the new road on the lower slope. But the ancient main road took a totally different course. It ran due west from the middle of the town to above Wormhill and, still keeping west, entered Buxton through Fairfield, never falling to the Wye till it reached Buxton itself. Buxton, Fairfield, Hargate Wall Hill, Tideswell—such is the route you find in the old road books. We will take this road for part of the way, and very dull it is for the first mile and a half, with no view save of stone walls and pastures.

Anna Seward thus describes it:—

> The long, lone tracks of Tideswell's naked moor,
> Stretched on vast hills that far and near prevail,
> Bleak, stony, bare, monotonous and pale.

Or again, in lines which show how completely devoid she was of humour:—

> But from the moor the rude stone walls disjoin,
> With angle sharp and long unvaried line,
> The cheerless field—where slowly wandering feed
> The lonely cow and melancholy steed.

Then suddenly the road makes a surprising and extraordinary swoop, a breakneck fall into a ravine which must have caused the "outsides" on the coaches to hold their breath as they slithered down. Everything was done to ease the descent, but little was possible, for here is a sinuous cleft in the limestone, running up out of Miller's Dale to Peak Forest for a long five miles. At its widest, near Miller's Dale, it bears the name of Monk's Dale, which ends here where we cross it; then Peter Dale takes up the tale for a mile or more and eventually becomes Hay Dale and Dam Dale, scarcely worth distinguishing names. Here, between Monk's Dale and Peter Dale, is a curious gap with a great curving stretch of level meadow at the foot of the steep descent, and a charming vista down the wooded sides of Monk's Dale and round the bend of the more open dale on our right. Do not climb the opposite hill, but

take a footpath on the left which issues in an ancient bridle way, older, one can hardly doubt, than the high road itself. This, if you follow its meanderings, leads out through fields to a farm, with Wormhill Church on the left hand. Rhodes tells us that this district was but newly enclosed in his day and formerly had been some of the wildest forest country in England, where rent was paid not in money but wolves' heads.

Wormhill itself, a tiny village, finds but scanty mention in the books, yet few spots better deserve to be called a "haunt of ancient peace" than its miniature church and churchyard. The rectory garden and the churchyard blend; we can hardly tell where the one begins and the other ceases. The smooth rectory lawn bounds the path to the church porch with no intervening hedge, and on the other side are the tall trees surrounding Wormhill Hall, resonant with a colony of rooks. The church, bowered amid exquisite trees, has evidently been the care of pious hands. It is a modern fabric; only the base of the quaint tower is old; but the windows are full of fine glass, and the stencil decoration is rich and good. Rarely does a modern village church possess that air of repose which often broods over an ancient sanctuary, but Wormhill possesses it, and the lines which Stephen Hawker carved in stone over his rectory at Morwenstow would not be inapt here:—

> "A house, a glebe, a pound a day,
> A pleasant place to watch and pray,
> Be true to Church, be kind to poor,
> O Minister, for evermore!"

I count among my happiest discoveries in Derbyshire the exquisite retreat of Wormhill Church.

Just outside, in the middle of a curiously wasted space, between the high road and a tract on a lower level, is a canopied drinking fountain set in a small plantation of holly and yew. Steps lead down to it from the high road and stone seats are fixed round its blank walls. At the lower side is a drinking trough with triple partition. It is an ugly affair, hopelessly

inartistic and crude, but it has its human interest, for this drinking fountain was put up in 1875, in memory of James Brindley, the famous civil engineer, who was born in Wormhill parish in 1716. His actual birth-place was rather more than a mile away, between Great Rocks and Tunstead, in a cottage which has long since vanished. The site, however, is marked by an ash tree which, as a seedling, forced its way up through the flags in the cottage floor. When the flags were removed it grew to be a fine tree and is known to this day as Brindley's Tree. Brindley was entirely uneducated and to the end of his days wrote and spelt with difficulty. His pocket book contains such entries as "loog o' daal", for "log of deal", while "ocular survey" becomes "ochilor servey." Yet educated or not, "The Schemer," as he was nicknamed in his early days, was the leading engineer of his generation and the right hand man of the great Duke of Bridgewater. It was Brindley who planned the construction of the Duke's first canal from Worsley to Manchester, the immediate result of which was to reduce the price of coal in Manchester from sevenpence a cwt. to threepence halfpenny. His scheme to carry the canal over the Irwell at Barton met with merciless ridicule; when it was completed, it was the wonder of the year. A writer in the *Annual Register* for 1763 describes how, while he was "surveying it with a mixture of wonder and delight, four barges passed in the space of three minutes, two of them being chained together and dragged by two horses, who went on the terras of the canal, wheron I must own I hardly dare venture to walk, as I almost trembled to behold the large river Irwell underneath me." This illiterate engineer, who used to go to bed to think out his plans without paper or pencil, devised in all about three hundred and sixty miles of canal, of which his greatest triumphs were the Manchester and Liverpool and the Grand Trunk or Trent and Mersey. He deserved a better monument than this drinking trough.

Both Wormhill Church and Wormhill Hall are closely

associated with the Bagshawes of Ford, and until recent years, the living was usually held by a Bagshawe. This fact, doubtless, accounts for the charm and comfort of the rectory. The Rev. William Bagshawe, who built the bastard Gothic additions to Ford Hall, was vicar here in his earlier years. What manner of man he was may best be guessed from an illuminating extract from his diary. The date is February 3, 1794:—

"Sunday:—Preached at Wormhill on the vanity of human pursuits and human pleasures—to a polite audience an affecting sermon. Rode in the evening to Castleton, where I read three discourses by Secker. In the Forest I was sorry to observe a party of boys playing at football. I spoke to them but was laughed at, and on my departure one of the boys gave the ball a wonderful kick—a proof this of the degeneracy of human nature."

Enough! enough! One can see the Rev. William to the life and one does not like the look of him. No wonder the boy on Peak Forest kicked as he never kicked before! For a year or two Bagshawe was at Buxton, and it is said that Anna Seward liked his preaching. That is another black mark against his name. Wilberforce, on the contrary, said he preferred sermons which "made people uneasy." In other words, the great evangelical clearly doubted the soundness of the Rev. William Bagshawe's conversion.

Passing Wormhill Hall we rejoin our bridle path by the side of a game-keeper's cottage on the right and then suddenly there breaks into view all the leafy loveliness of Chee Dale, as the limestone ravine of the Wye is here called. We quit the main path at this point, for it turns eastward along the high ground and then dips down to a ford and foot-bridge over the river. Our track descends precipitously into a little wooded glen which runs up northward from the main ravine—a glen whose tiny stream flows underground until it bubbles out with wonderful clearness and surprising volume among the stones a few yards below us and quickly loses itself in the Wye. We cross this brook and follow up the left bank of the

Chee Tor, Miller's Dale.

river along a stony path which demands an irritating amount of attention. The banks rise up on both sides to a goodly

height, wooded to the very top, and the reach is charming as it begins to bend. Then, across the stream, Chee Tor comes into view, superbly solid and big, the home of chattering jackdaws who find secure refuge in the crevices of its rounded sides. The Wye flows briskly along at its foot, in a broad channel, choked with burdock and other river weeds in mid-stream. Chee Tor is three hundred feet in height, and the measure of the cliff's majesty, therefore, is the measure of three hundred feet. Appraising it coolly, we should say that it is not so fine as the High Tor at Matlock, but more striking than, though not so lofty as, Fin Cop in Monsal Dale. The woods, on the other hand, are superior to those of Matlock, but inferior to the magnificent amphitheatre at Monsal Dale. It is the shape of Chee Tor which charms the eye so much, its rounded massive outline, its air of solidity, and the contrast of the bare rock with the luxuriant foliage which casts its shade on every side of it. Beyond the Tor the glen widens, and we see a bridge ahead and the black opening in the cliff where it is pierced by the railway. This is the point where travellers by train suddenly catch a glimpse of an exquisite bit of river scenery. It is a surprise view for which the eye is the less prepared as the train rushes out of one tunnel into another, and when one starts to look again, the view is gone. The general character of the gorge remains much the same beyond the bridge up to the ruined Blackwell Mill, but loses some of its wooded loveliness as we approach the main road from Bakewell near the foot of Topley Pike.

Buxton is only three miles distant through Ashwood Dale, but my route was planned to take me back to Tideswell. I retraced my way to Wormhill Dale and then kept forward along the level stretch by the side of the Wye, to where the bridle path comes down and crosses the river. Here is a delightful retrospect back to the fork where the little glen breaks up to Wormhill in a glorious expanse of green woods. And so on to the railway bridge—where the line emerges from

its long tunnel and crosses to the left bank of the stream—a pretty sylvan scene whose gentle and reposeful beauties form the entrance to the more prosaic Miller's Dale. Here, half a century ago, a terrible poaching affray took place, and the young owner of Wormhill Hall, W. H. Bagshawe, died of wounds received in a midnight *mêlée* in the river bed. Five men were tried on the charge of murder before Mr. Justice Maule, but they were all acquitted—a verdict which was received with general amazement, for the evidence seemed overwhelming. The accused, however, escaped on the plea that the young squire was the attacking party and began the fight, not in order to arrest them, but to punish them himself for poaching his fish. We soon pass the mill from which Miller's Dale takes its name, and see how once upon a time, before the railway came and scarred the smooth face of the hills and before men began to quarry for limestone and burn it and build their appalling waste heaps, Miller's Dale had a beauty of its own. Passing under the viaduct—they were busy doubling it when I was there—we approach three white roads trending to the point of union. The lowest runs down the valley to Litton Mills, and the other two are the roads to Tideswell. Nor do you wonder, when you see them, why drivers who had regard for their horses wished to avoid the road which leads straight up over the hill side. Take it, nevertheless, and very soon you shall find on the left a footpath for recompense, which slants through a long succession of fields out into the road again over the crest of a rise, from which you can see the roofs of Tideswell and the pinnacles of its church tower.

CHAPTER XVI

CRESSBROOK DALE, MONSAL DALE, AND ASHFORD

LEAVING Tideswell we take the narrow path opposite the George Inn, enter the high road and keep along its dull, uninteresting course to Litton, a short mile away. The village lies beneath a little ridge of no importance, and consists of a long, straggling street of considerable breadth. Its chief distinction is that it was the birthplace of the Apostle of the Peak and the original home of the gifted family of the Lyttons. But the latter quitted Litton in 1597, and left no memorial behind them save the bones and brasses of their ancestors in Tideswell Church. Passing through the village to its eastern extremity, we take a by-road on the right, which soon runs into a cross road. From there a footpath leads through a long series of fields to Cressbrook Dale, a broad and deep valley, which winds up to Wardlow Mires, its sides bare of aught but scanty herbage. Wardlow Mires—or Mears, as it used sometimes to be spelt—was the scene of the last Derbyshire gibbet. A toll-bar stood here and Hannah Oliver, the old widow who kept it, was murdered one day by a ruffian named Lingard. The murderer was fool as well as coward, for he took the shoes off his victim's feet and gave them to another woman. This led to his immediate arrest. He was hanged at Derby, and then the dead body was carried to the scene of the murder and set up in chains. The bill amounted to £126 9*s.* 5*d.*—the gibbeting alone cost £85 4*s.*—rather a heavy expenditure for a problematical benefit.

As we enter Cressbrook Dale from Litton it begins to be pleasantly wooded on either side. The path keeps along the upper level for a few hundred yards and then plunges steeply down through the trees, till it joins a cart track, which in turn runs into the main road at a sharp bend, and then gently descends to the outlet of the dale. This is the road from Tideswell to Miller's Dale, which has been forced to quit the side of the Wye and take a circuitous journey over the hills. Cressbrook Dale is very pleasant, as a dale must needs be which sends scores of pounds' worth of lilies of the valley to the Manchester market, but when I saw it the foliage was too dense to permit of extensive views. Ebenezer Rhodes gives a rapturous description of it, but in a note to his edition of 1824 he says that "the dale has been despoiled of its finest features; many of the trees have disappeared from it; it has been robbed of its most picturesque accompaniments, and it is now comparatively a tame and insipid scene." The woods which he praised so highly are closed to the public. The road leads us down to the Cressbrook Mills, which are associated with the name of one of Derbyshire's minor worthies. This is William Newton, to whom Anna Seward gave the resounding title of "Minstrel of the Peak." No volume of his poems ever seems to have been published, and beyond a few fugitive pieces, contributed to Sheffield newspapers, and a longish poem in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, his work has apparently perished. His name first became known outside his own local circle through Anna Seward sending to the *Gentleman's Magazine* an account of her *protégé*, together with a specimen of his verse. This was a poem dedicated to herself in the most flattering language:—

> "I boast no aid from Phoebus or the Nine,
> No sister Graces decorate my line,
> The Spring Pierian never flowed for me,
> Those dulcet waters were reserved for thee."

There are other couplets just as effusive, which the fair Anna accepted with the utmost complacence as being no more than her due, and read, depend upon it, without a blush, though they occupied a whole page of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Her account of Newton himself is written in a tone of exasperating patronage which Lord Chesterfield might have envied. She describes him with as little regard for a poet's sensitive feelings—if he had any—as though he were a fossil in a museum.

William Newton, she tells us, was born at Wardlow. This is a mistake, for he was born in 1750 at Cockett, or Cockey Farm, a small holding on the Abney estate which still finds a place on the ordnance map. "His father was a carpenter," continues Miss Seward, "too ignorant to give his son any literary advantages and too indigent to procure them for him. A dame's school and a writing master formed the boundaries of our minstrel's education. He worked at his father's trade, and very early became so skilful and ingenious as to be employed by some few genteel families in the neighbourhood. On these occasions, I have been told, he used to examine books which accidentally lay about in the apartments where he was at work. They awakened into sensibility and expansion the internal fires of his spirit. Every species of fine writing engaged his attention, but poetry enchanted him." Newton, she says, married early in life "a young woman of his own rank," named Helen Cooke. She was three years his junior, and died, according to the inscription on their tomb in Tideswell churchyard, just a week after her husband, when he was eighty and she was seventy-seven.

Newton's gift for verse-making was first discovered about 1780 by the Rev. Peter Cunningham, the curate in charge of Eyam, himself a weaver of rhymes. At that time Newton was still working as a carpenter, finding his chief employment in constructing machines for the cotton mills of the district and also acting as head carpenter for the Duke of Devonshire's

building operations at Buxton. "Till Mr. Cunningham kindly distinguished him," says Miss Seward, "he had associated only with the unlettered and inelegant vulgar," and she calmly continues, "This self-taught bard is rather handsome, but aims at nothing in his appearance but the clean and decent." She praises "the ease and elegance of his epistolary style," and quotes a specimen from a letter which Newton had sent to her, in acknowledgment of a copy of her poems. Newton wrote as follows:—"Indeed, since I received this testimony of your amity, young Hope and Joy have aided the hands of the Mechanic. Every sublime and beautiful object which I used to view with a melancholy languor has now acquired a most animating sight in my eyes. As a warm sunbeam dispels the heavy dew and raises the head of a drooping field-flower, so has your kind attention dispersed the clouds which have been cast about me by adverse and wayward Fortune." This is poor stuff. We may find excuse for Newton writing it, slavishly imitating the elegancies of the period, but none for Anna Seward sending it to the printer as a specimen of "easy and elegant" style. But she sent it, of course, to flatter her own consuming vanity. We will quote the one passage from Newton's poem which has a biographical interest:—

> "Unknown to fame, to Cunningham unknown,
> My reed has sounded to the groves alone;
> My youth unblest, without a friend to cheer,
> My hopes to chasten or my verse to rear,
> I artless tried the Sylvan song to frame:
> Spontaneous numbers at my bidding came,
> But rugged still, unmusical they ran,
> And Reason blamed what Vanity began."

Those are quite respectable heroic couplets for one who never had a polite education. Not long afterwards, about 1786, Newton obtained an engagement at £50 a year as "machinery carpenter" at a cotton-mill in Monsal Dale, but in 1788 the mill and the cottages adjoining were burnt to the ground, and Newton lost everything he possessed, narrowly

escaping with his life. Anna Seward then showed the true value of her friendship by raising a few guineas for him among her friends, and got him the offer of a third partnership in a cotton-mill, for which he was to build the machines and keep them in order. The condition was that he found £200 capital. An old woman who lived with him and his wife sold her little bit of property to the value of £150 and lent it to Newton, and Anna Seward herself advanced the remaining £50. From that day he began to rise in the world, and in 1793 was worth a thousand pounds. Two years later, when Anna Seward was in Buxton, Newton paid her a visit, at her invitation. She was a little nervous as to what the fine folk at the wells would say if the "Swan of Lichfield" were seen with a person of little breeding, and so "to preclude wonder and comment upon my paying attention to such an apparent rustic at the public table," she paved the way beforehand by showing her friends some specimens of Newton's verse which greatly surprised them. How the visit passed we do not know.

Newton never forgot his debt of gratitude to Miss Seward, and to his last day wrote and spoke of her in terms of the most unqualified admiration. Ebenezer Rhodes, who had access to Newton's papers, quotes from a manuscript in which Newton, after an ecstatic enumeration of her accomplishments, says: "The grace and elegance of her form were equal to the energies of her mind and the brilliancy of her imagination. Born and nurtured in the bosom of those mountains which gave her birth, I knew her very early in life, and, when she was in her twentieth year, to her might have been applied the language of one of our most eminent writers . . . . 'I saw her at ——, and surely never lighted upon this earth, which she scarcely seemed to touch, a more delightful vision.'" The reference, of course, is to Burke's eulogy of Marie Antoinette. If one did not know the facts one would certainly imagine that Newton had cherished for Miss Seward an ardent passion. But if he worshipped, it was as one might worship a goddess.

On no other terms would Anna Seward have permitted his adoration.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century Newton was evidently a fairly well-to-do man, and the cotton-mill at Cressbrook Dale flourished. But books and the arts continued to be his ruling passion. Sir Francis Chantrey, the sculptor, used to tell the story of how one day, as he was walking down Monsal Dale, he happened to overtake a man dressed in coarse homespun, to all appearances an ordinary peasant or workman. Sir Francis got into conversation with him, and began to praise the beauty of the scenery through which they were passing. To his amazement he discovered that his companion was fully as sensitive as himself to the charm of the landscape and expressed his admiration in language which showed the culture of his mind. "I found myself," he says, "in glowing contact with a mind awakened to all the touching beauties of the scenery, to poetic expression, and to such an appreciation of the fine arts as astonished and delighted me." More interesting still is the narrative of a Mrs. Sterndale, who visited the mill in 1824 and described the conditions under which the pauper children lived and worked. They were in marked and happy contrast with the conditions prevailing throughout Lancashire and Yorkshire, where the so-called apprentices were no better than little slaves working for the scantiest wages under the whips of brutal overseers for twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen hours a day. This infamous system, gradually abolished by successive Factory Acts, was a scandal to English civilisation, for in the majority of cases the pauper children, who were let out on contract by Boards of Guardians, suffered misery and torture. There were exceptions, however, and Cressbrook Mill under Newton's management was one of them. Mrs. Sterndale says that she found there was no unnatural labour. "The children's hours of work and their necessary relaxation are kindly and judiciously arranged; the former never exceeding that which ought to be exacted from those in their station of life and of their tender

age. Their food is of the best quality and amply dispensed: they have eight hours' uninterrupted sleep in comfortable beds and airy rooms." Relatives were allowed to visit the children and were "hospitably entertained and permitted to remain a suitable time, according to their own behaviour and the distance from which they came." Personal cleanliness was scrupulously enforced. In fine weather the children used to walk the three miles to Tideswell and attend service on Sundays at the church; in winter, Sunday-school was held in one of the larger rooms at the mill. They had also, we are told, little flower-gardens of their own — twelve feet by eight — and boys with an ear for music were taught to sing and play. This musical privilege, however, was denied to the girls, in order that the girls and boys might be kept separate as much as possible, an arrangement which Mrs. Sterndale approved as being "creditable to the judgment and decorum that accompany the whole system." But she hastens to add that as the girls' rooms were immediately above the boys', the "sweet sounds would ascend and the girls participate in the harmony." Let us hope they appreciated this vicarious enjoyment.

There are still one or two old people in Cressbrook who worked in the mills under the apprentice system, and lived in the little row of cottages facing down the road. This used to be called Apprentices Row. Then, when there were no more apprentices, it was renamed Pancake Row; but now the superior taste of the times and the keener sensitiveness to ridicule on the part of those who dwell there have led to its being christened Dale View! The cottages terminate on the river-side in a most extraordinary specimen of bastard architecture, now fast falling into ruins. It seems to have been used as a place of worship for the apprentices, possibly before they grew so numerous that service was held, as Mrs. Sterndale says, in one of the larger rooms at the mill. When in 1835 the mills were bought by Messrs. McConnel, a hundred and sixty-seven girl apprentices were transferred for

the residue of their respective terms of apprenticeship. In the inventory of articles taken over at a valuation were 135 new bonnets, at £14 14*s.* 4*d.*, or two shillings and threepence each, and 167 partly worn outfits, each consisting of a bonnet, a stuff dress, a stuff petticoat, and a blue and white slip. These were valued at £87 13*s.* 6*d.*, or half-a-guinea an outfit. As an example of the sleeping accommodation, one of the bedrooms contained four double bedsteads valued at ten guineas, and two single ones valued at two guineas, and to each flock bed were assigned three blankets and one sheet and cover.

The mills themselves are known as Little Mill, Old Mill, and Big Mill, the two latter being built of yellow stucco. The Big Mill is a handsome building, shaped like some Georgian Palace with a high-pitched roof The mill clock bears the date 1837, and in a fine cupola swings the bell that calls to work. The original Cressbrook Mill stood on the site of the Old or centre Mill, and was at one time used as a peppermint distillery, the wild mint growing on the hillside. This was burnt down about 1790. When it was rebuilt, it came into possession of the Arkwrights of Cromford, by whom it was sold in 1793 as "the building lately erected for spinning cotton wool." Evidently, therefore, Newton's connection with Cressbrook Mills did not begin until after 1793. The Little Mill and the Big Mill were built between then and 1835, when they passed into the possession of the McConnels.

Just past the Cressbrook Mills we enter Upper Dale; Monsal Dale proper does not begin until we reach the bend of the river. No one, approaching the dale as we have done, will understand at first the eulogies which have been lavished upon it. For, as the road falls to the level of the Wye, we see the railway tunnel half-way up the opposite bank, and a long embankment on the hillside stretching a mile down the valley. Midway is the station, beyond which the road rises with painful steepness. Yet having climbed to the top of Headstones Head, as the summit is called, we immediately see

why Monsal Dale is famous. The undistinguished valley becomes, when viewed from above, a thing of beauty. We see the narrow river as it really is, with green strips of meadow fringing it on either side and clean-cut banks. The mills are hidden from sight by a wooded knoll descending to the road from the upper heights, and continuing towards us in a towering hill which seems to gain in stature because it is bare of trees. The only dwellings visible in the vale are a large farmhouse midway, and a smaller one at our feet with a tiny wooden bridge at its side set on stone piers. On the right bank of the Wye the hill rises steeply, and here is the railway, crossing the river, where it bends sharply to the right, by a tall viaduct of five arches, and plunging at once into the hill below us. On our left hand is the first short reach of Monsal Dale proper, where the Wye, faced by a giant barrier, twists sharply, flows straight for a few hundred yards, and then begins to wind around the graceful curve of Fin Cop. Looking down from Headstones Head on a sunny day the Wye looks a fairy river, so placid are its reaches, and set in such exquisite setting of green. Putty Hill—the unromantic name of the corner hill around which the Wye makes its sharp turn—slopes gently down to a terrace of pasture land. The hill on which we stand falls smoothly to the river-side. The charm of the scene lies in the exquisite combination of hill and river and woods.

Has Monsal Dale been spoilt by the railway? Not for me, though the bridge over the Wye and the long line of embankment are blots upon what would otherwise be a perfect scene. The railway in this particular place is famous, for it was chosen by Ruskin to point the moral of one of his fiercest outbursts against the utilitarian spirit of the age. Let us quote the passage at length:—

"You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be needful. But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown but in green and

blue and all imaginable colours, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then, not one of you cares for the loss of them now when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening—Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light—walking in fair procession on the lawns of it, and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get): you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls 'Railroad Enterprise.' You enterprised a railroad through the valley—you blasted its rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone and the Gods with it, and now every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half an hour and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange—you Fools everywhere."

This is sheer extravagance, though the crimes against picturesque beauty which railway companies have committed—and are committing even now—are so many that they deserve an occasional bludgeoning. Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light have not wholly deserted Monsal Dale, or Ashwood Dale, to which Ruskin's outburst would equally well apply. They too, we fancy, like other shy beings, have gradually grown used to the roar of the expresses, and have not wholly withdrawn their gracious presence. After all, railways are not logically more unnatural than a macadamised road, and they may have their charm. The well-kept permanent way, with its steel rails shining bright, need not necessarily be an eyesore, and a country railway station, however prosaic in detail, may be made a bower even for Flora herself. Much nonsense is talked and written about the unsightliness of railways. One would not choose them in a fair landscape; but if the choice is between a railway, on the one hand, and a mill chimney or a colliery or a limekiln on the other, then I would vote for the railway with both hands, always provided that its engineers try to reduce its necessarily offensive qualities to a minimum. Ruskin had his pet foibles, and inability to appreciate the

beauty and strength and speed of a train gliding along its course at fifty miles an hour was one of them. To others it is a delight to the eye and a stimulus to mental and bodily activity. There are people who rave about the beauty of a yacht under sail and deny that there is beauty in the lines of a great ocean liner. It is all a matter of what Lamb called "imperfect sympathies."

Remembering what Ruskin had written of this railway, I purposely waited, high above the tunnel mouth, till a train should pass. Soon I heard the shrill of a far-off whistle and the rushing sound of a distant train. Then silence again. The train had entered the tunnel on the Ashford side of the hill. A little while and a rumbling began, growing in intensity every second until, with an exultant roar, the express came out from the hill below me, crossed the bridge, and swung round the bend of the embankment towards Monsal Dale station. The engine was straining up the incline, working hard, putting forth obvious effort, and addressing itself to its task. In a few moments another train came gliding down in the opposite direction, not conscious of her load. She flew down the embankment like a skater with the wind behind him, holding her breath in enjoyment of the pace. The sight might have startled Ruskin's goddesses "walking in fair procession on the lawns"; but do they always "walk in fair procession"? I will be bound that the thousand Oreades who formed Diana's troop of nymphs on the banks of the Eurotas or the crags of Cynthus would clap their hands with glee if they could see an express flying down Monsal Dale, and would halloo to the scared driver in his cab and bid him go faster still.

However, there the railway is and there it will remain, and if it troubles you it is easy to get away from it. We take the footpath from the litter of refreshment-rooms at the summit and continue along the hillside, keeping well up until we have left the viaduct behind us, and then dipping pleasantly down through the wood to the river-side at the end of the first reach.

Here a weir has been built, semicircular in form and with deep steps, over which the Wye tumbles in white foam, cascading from the fourth step on to some broken rocks a few feet below, and then falling in rapids into the blackness of a deep pool. It is all in miniature, but all exceedingly charming. The path then crosses the river by a foot-bridge, and the grand receding sweep of the high woods on the further side contrasts finely with the absolute bareness of Fin Cop at this point, as the Wye turns to flow round its foot. The Cop is a curious hill continually presenting new faces to us, and nowhere rising perpendicularly from the river-bed. As we proceed, the limestone shows in patches through the grass, and the slopes of the Cop begin to be dotted with hawthorn trees of stunted growth, until at the end of the dale it falls rapidly away, parallel to the river's course, and the trees become a wood. Monsal Dale, like most other charming places in Derbyshire, has been the subject of much indiscriminate and jingling eulogy, Eliza Cook's oft-quoted stanza being the most irritating of all:—

> "And Monsal, thou mine of Arcadian treasure,
> Need we seek for Greek islands and spice-laden gales,
> While a temple like thine of enchantment and pleasure
> May be found in our own native Derbyshire dales?"

Monsal Dale is charming, but just a little disappointing. One expects much after the exquisite view from Headstones Head and the glorious amphitheatre of woods from the foot-bridge, but the expectation is not quite realised. Fin Cop itself does not fulfil its promise. The turf on either side of the river in the broad expanse between the hill and the woods is littered with weeds, and the channel of the Wye is ragged and unkempt. The dale ends abruptly, though not before it affords us a third magnificent view—that of the noble Great Shacklow Wood, rising up almost sheer with precipitous green drives. It seems to block all exit from the valley,

though the Wye manages to squeeze a way, and there is also room, as we shall find, for a good high road.

As we turn reluctantly from the river-side, we pass a broad sheet of water, called the Quaker Fish Ponds, and issue into the main road between Buxton and Bakewell. A cast-iron mile-post tells us that we are four miles from Bakewell and eight from Buxton, thirty from Derby, and thirty-two from Manchester; while in letters not merely painted, but raised in relief from the very fabric of the mile-post itself, is the legend "London, 156." Even here, in the heart of the country, London refuses to be forgotten. We turn leftwards towards Bakewell and the pleasant little town of Ashford that lies midway. Soon we pass round the foot of Great Shacklow Wood. From Monsal Dale we only saw a single side of it; here at the bend where we cross the Wye we see with what a noble sweep it lies back from the road and how dense is its mass of shade. In another mile we reach the Ashford Marble Works, which date back to 1748 and were the first of their kind in England. The sawing and polishing machinery was the invention of Henry Watson of Bakewell, a son of the Samuel Watson of Heanor who did much of the ornamental stonework at Chatsworth, and uncle of White Watson, the Bakewell geologist and sculptor. The business, it is said, did not bring him much profit, but the works have been in continuous activity for a century and a half.

A leafy stretch of road now takes us on to Ashford—or Ashford-in-the-Water, to give it its full name. Its streets are commonplace, though a few interesting old buildings survive near the church, which was rebuilt rather more than thirty years ago. Its Jacobean pulpit is plentifully adorned with rusty nails driven into it in the name of church decoration at festival times. Wise vicars lay a stern embargo on iron nails, however saintly the fingers which delicately ply the hammer. Five paper funeral garlands hang from the beams of the north

aisle. One was set up in the year 1747, another in 1798. The latter was inscribed with the lines :—

"Be always ready, no time delay ;
I in my youth was called away.
Great grief to those I leave behind,
But I hope I've great joy to find."

The custom was once general throughout Derbyshire and in many other districts of England, that whenever a girl died unmarried her companions made a paper garland which was carried before the coffin into the church and then hung up above where the deceased used to sit. The garland was made of two hoops, bound with strips of thin wood like a hollow bell or birdcage. These were then covered with paper rosettes and long paper streamers, and paper gloves, bearing the dead girl's name, were hung from the inside of the hoop, which was often decorated with such symbols of death as a paper hour-glass or a painted egg-shell. The girl mourners wore white hoods of calico and muslin tied with black ribbons, and carried long wands. Then, as the coffin was borne into the church, they formed into two lines and stood with crossed wands, and the funeral procession passed beneath. The last girl to be buried in Ashford with a garland was named Blackwell. She had fallen into a whirlpool or "twirl-hole" of the Wye near the marble works and was drowned.

Anna Seward mentions the paper garlands which hung in Eyam church, and Ebenezer Rhodes saw others at Hathersage. Those at Ashford, with others at Matlock and South Wingfield, are the sole survivors in Derbyshire. Two stanzas from an old ballad will better explain the sentiment attaching to this pretty custom of "virgin crants" than any rationalistic explanation would do :—

"But since I'm resolved to die for my dear
I'll choose six young virgins my coffin to bear,
And all those young virgins I now do choose
Instead of green ribbands, green ribbands, green ribbands,
Instead of green ribbands, a garland shall bear.

"And when in the church in the grave I lie deep,
Let all those fine garlands, fine garlands, fine garlands,
Let all those fine garlands hang over my feet.
And when any of my sex behold the sight
They may see I've been constant, been constant,
They may see I've been constant to my heart's delight."

In a field at the back of Ashford Church are traces of a small moat, now dry. The books declare that this was the site of a castle, where lived Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Kent, and brother of the unfortunate but inept Edward II. His heiress carried the property into the Holland family, from which it passed to the Nevilles, who were Earls of Westmoreland. Curious —and absurd—legends are current in the village of hidden treasure lying under the mounds within the moat and of dark mysterious reasons why permission to dig is always refused.

On Ashford bridge is an inlet stone with the name and date "M. Hyde 1664." This is said to refer, not to the builder or repairer of the structure, but to an unfortunate person whose horse shied while crossing the bridge and threw its rider over the parapet into the river, where he was drowned. When clear of the village we approach Ashford Hall on the left hand, for many years the home of Lord George Cavendish, an uncle of the present Duke, and long Member of Parliament for the county of Derby. Close by a private footpath leading to a little bridge over the Wye, is a public path through the meadows. This crosses two or three fields and then comes out by the riverside, where the Wye has been artificially broadened in order to form a wide lagoon, for the beautification of the view from the windows of Ashford Hall. Further on are a second sheet of water and a weir, and, ere the path rejoins the main road, we have charming glimpses of alluring woods on either side. In front of us is an old cotton mill of the Arkwrights, which has recently been translated into electric storage works, and a turn of the road soon brings us to the outskirts of Bakewell.

CHAPTER XVII

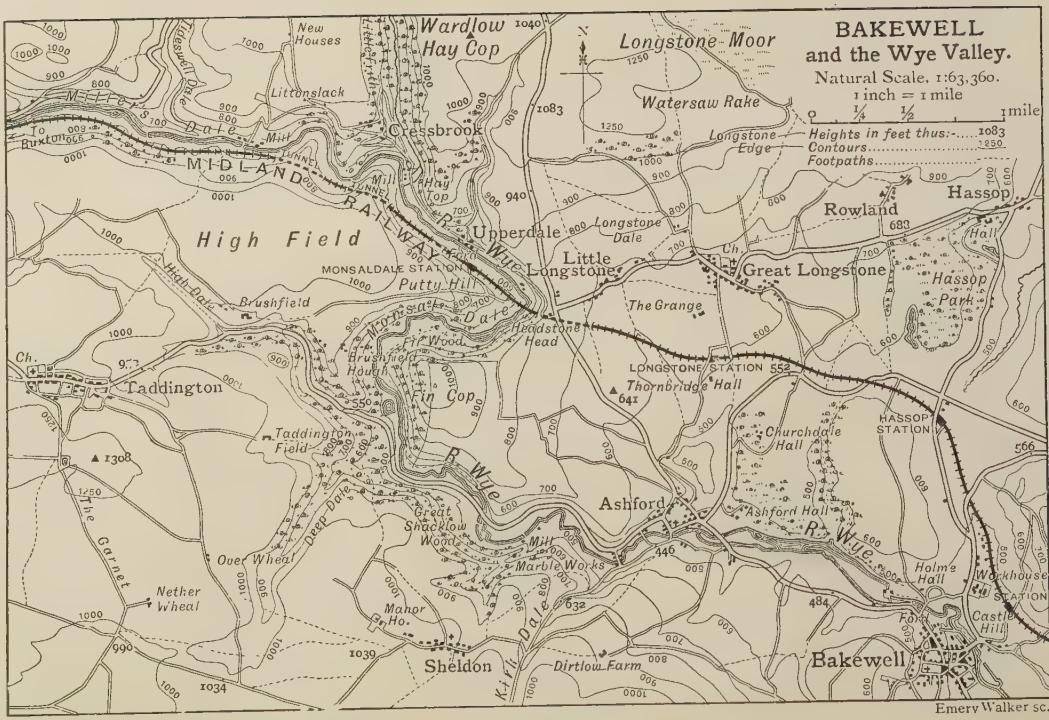
BAKEWELL

Bakewell is a pleasant market town of great antiquity, beautifully situated on the lower slope of the hill above the right bank of the Wye, as the valley broadens down towards Haddon. On the left bank are woods which continue to Rowsley with pretty interludes of meadow and retiring dales. Facing the town is the Castle Hill, on which the railway station is set, for the line is carried along on the hillside, as travellers will remember who have seen the brief but attractive glimpse of Bakewell and its church that is vouchsafed from the trains. A Saxon town stood here in remote days—the famous Cross in the churchyard is the one surviving relic—and those who like variant spellings may rejoice in Baecanwyllan, Baddecanwell or Badequelle. But Bakewell seems simpler and better. As for the long-vanished castle, it was built, so the Chronicles say, by Edward the Elder as a menace to unruly Mercians.

It looks a pretty town, as one turns the corner from the station and sees the winding river with its level lawn-like edges of green, and then passes over the characteristic Derbyshire bridge and enters the principal street. Of ancient buildings it can make little boast. There is a fine Tudor house, Holme Hall, near the bridge on the way to the Gas Works, and the old Market Hall is of some interest, though its lower storey is hopelessly disfigured by recent alterations. The new Town Hall suggests the dullest spirit of municipaldom. But a

pretty strip of trim garden is seen as one continues along the main street. This is the Bath Garden, and at the further end is the Bath House, a curious place with a narrow oak staircase, all turns and twists. In the cellars below is a large bath. Once much admired, its arched vault is as bare and cheerless as whitewash can make it. The bath has a stone floor, through holes in which the chalybeate water (of a temperature of 60 degrees Fahrenheit) bubbles up. A tolerably constant flow is maintained in winter, but in summer it has a trick of failing, and, when I saw it, the water was not more than two or three inches deep. The property of the Duke of Rutland, this bath was built by one of his ancestors in 1697, and was restored about a century ago. Use it has none, for the water flows in and out at its own will. Moreover, taste has changed and it is no longer thought agreeable to bathe in a sort of prison vault with a reverberating echo which sends even a whisper rumbling round the arch. The Bath House above, now a club, was the residence in the early years of the nineteenth century of the well-known Derbyshire geologist, White Watson, who acted as superintendent of the baths and kept here a collection of fossils and specimens and also a Town News Room. He died in 1835 at the age of seventy-four, and lies buried in the churchyard up the hill, where his epitaph tells us that "he was well-known in the county as a sculptor, antiquary, and mineralogist, and as the author of *Derbyshire Strata*, a geological work of rare value at the time." Watson was not a sculptor, in the ordinary sense of the term; he was rather a "statuary" or "a monumental mason," as some of that calling delight to honour themselves, and his handiwork is to be seen in many of the neighbouring churches. He had been born to the profession, for he was the grandson of Samuel Watson, of Heanor, and nephew of the Henry Watson whose work we shall find at Chatsworth.

Bakewell's second chalybeate well, known as the Peat Well —the name is thought by some to be a corruption of St. Peter's


BAKEWELL
and the Wye Valley.
Natural Scale, 1:63,360.
1 inch = 1 mile
0 ¼ ½ 1 mile
Heights in feet thus:-.... 1083
Contours.....
Footpaths.....
Wardlow Hay Cop
Longstone Moor
Watersaw Rake
Longstone Edge
New Houses
Litton Slack
Cressbrook
Mill Dale
To Buxton
MIDLAND RAILWAY
Hay Top
Upperdale
Longstone Dale
Rowland
Hassop
Hall
High Field
MONSALDALE STATION
Putty Hill
Little Longstone
Great Longstone
Ch.
Hassop Park
Brushfield
Hah Dale
Monsal Dale
The Grange
Headstone Head
Fir Wood
Brushfield Hough
Ch.
Taddington
Fin Cop
LONGSTONE STATION
Thornbridge Hall
HASSOP STATION
Churchdale Hall
Taddington Field
The Garnet
Deep Dale
Great Shacklow Wood
Ashford
Ashford Hall
R. Wye
Over Wheal
Nether Wheal
Mill
Marble Works
Holme Hall
Workhouse
STATION
Manor Ho.
Kirk Dale
Dirtlow Farm
Castle Hill
Sheldon
Bakewell
Emery Walker sc.

Well—is situated in the Recreation Ground on the Haddon Road. There has been some talk of building baths here, and transforming Bakewell into a Spa like Buxton, but little has come of it. The Urban Council played with the idea for a few months and went to some expense in making experiments and tests to find where the water came from, but one fine day, when their officials arrived on the scene, they found that the Duke of Rutland's agent had taken possession. Perhaps as well! As a Spa Bakewell has not the remotest chance of rivalling Buxton without incurring expenditure which would cripple it with a mighty debt.

Bakewell has an ancient free school founded by Grace Lady Manners in 1636, some attractive alms-houses known as Sir John Manners' Hospital, a workhouse—honoured by Royal visitors from Chatsworth—on the Baslow Road, whose latticed windows, flower gardens and smooth lawns suggest a private mansion rather than the Union, and inns innumerable, though none of any particular note. The cruciform church, however, makes up for many deficiencies, standing in a perfect situation high up on the fringe of the town, nearly five hundred feet above sea level. Its spire is a familiar landmark for miles around, but the present one is of recent date. The old one was taken down in 1826 and for nearly twenty years the church was spireless. The interior is rather disappointing, for it is somewhat gloomy and bare. But the Vernon Chapel is full of interest. Here lie the Vernons and the Manners, the long line of the owners of Haddon. The earliest monument, a small alabaster table tomb of the date 1477, is that of John Vernon, and close by is Sir George Vernon, the last male of his line, who died in 1567. The King of the Peak, as his contemporaries called him, lies here with his two wives, Dame Margaret and Dame Mawde, in great magnificence, though the rich colours of the effigies are now dull and worn. His daughter Dorothy, who carried the Vernon estates into the Manners family, is to be seen on the very elaborate mural

monument to the right. There is the much fabled lady with her husband, Sir John Manners, a black bearded knight in armour, and her three sons and one daughter, all stiffly kneeling on uncomfortable cushions. Dame Dorothy's face betrays no sign of beauty, and it is difficult to associate romance either with her or her melancholy-looking spouse. Her face is peaked, shrewish even; one would say, to look at her, that she ruled her household with a sharp tongue. This does not, of course, preclude an earlier springtime of romance. Even lovers who make runaway weddings must travel onward to the prosaic period of middle age when they marvel at their past temerity. However winsome Dorothy Vernon may have been in her hey-day, she had lost her good looks most effectually by 1584, and the kneeling effigy strikes one with a sense of chill. It deals the *coup de grâce* to a pretty legend, unless, indeed, as is probable enough, it was a botching artist who moulded her face and form. This presentment of Dorothy Vernon is as disappointing as are the features of Cleopatra on contemporary coins, where one expects a glowing Queen of the Orient and finds a scowling virago. No, if that be Dorothy, that thin-cheeked, hard-visaged, Calvinistic-looking woman praying with tight lips, I withdraw my homage from the lady and settle it more firmly than ever on the stones of Haddon itself.

Sir John Manners, Dorothy's husband, died in 1611; his eldest son, Sir George, in 1623, at the age of fifty-four. His monument, even more elaborate than his father's, stands on the opposite wall of the chapel. It was put up by his widow, a Pierrepont, who records in a Latin inscription that she did so at her own expense, placing an effigy of herself by the side of that of her husband, in fulfilment of her vow that their ashes and dust should rest together—*quia cineres et ossa socianda vovit*. Poor lady! She left blank the date of her death to be filled in by her children; it remains empty to this day. This monument, however, is a never failing source of delight. One admires, for example, the supreme indifference to the needs of

posterity in the matter of wall-space, and the immodesty of building up this gorgeous creation, with its columns, and canopies, and effigies and scrolls, to the memory of a person of absolutely no distinction. And at the top of it all is the splendid equivocation, which no man in good health has ever honestly repeated—at least with reference to himself—"The day of a man's death is better than the day of his birth." Below the kneeling knight and his lady are nine canopied recesses, containing their three sons, five daughters and the baby. The text round the baby's canopy is "Mine age is nothing in respect of Thee," and the curious little almond-eyed figure, tied round the neck and feet like a mummy, draws the gaze of all who enter the chapel. "By the Grace of God I am what I am" is the text over the canopy of the son who was weak-minded. That fact is whispered with bated breath. "The poor young gentleman, if I may say so, was not quite right in his head." So spake one of the caretakers to some visitors not long ago, with a furtive glance around as though she were uttering treason to the House of Rutland. This respect for even the remote ancestors of the great family of the neighbourhood lingers still in English country districts. I was once in a church on the Berkshire Downs where the effigies of half-a-dozen old Crusaders lie in every stage of helpless mutilation. The castle where they lived had been demolished for six centuries; the name, a French one, had been utterly forgotten. Yet to the sexton these ancient effigies were still the great folk. Speaking of one of them he gravely said:—"He was the eldest son of the poor gentleman over yonder in the wall." I looked to where his finger pointed and saw that "the poor gentleman over yonder" was a headless, legless torso, with one arm surviving down to the elbow and all the rest of his limbs gone. For centuries the more irreverent rustics had carved their names on him, scratched him with nails, and despitefully used him—but to the sexton he was still "the poor gentleman over yonder."

The octagon font, with its eight rudely-carved figures, is of some interest, and so is the collection of fragments from the earlier churches which stood upon this site. The best of these—long-considered valueless rubbish—were looted by the Derbyshire antiquarian, Mr. Bateman, and taken off to his museum at Lomberdale House, a few miles away. The remainder were suffered to lie in the porch. On Mr. Bateman's death the Bakewell stones were sent to the Sheffield Museum, but in 1899 the Sheffield authorities generously gave them back, recognising that they had no moral claim to their possession. They now stand at the west end of the nave. But to me of greater interest than these stones is a name which appears on the list of Bakewell's vicars, that of a certain Hamlet Charlton, who was vicar from 1609 to 1614. Charlton, who would almost certainly be thirty years of age before being made vicar of Bakewell, would thus be christened not later than 1580. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, as we know it, was not published until 1604, though there was an earlier tragedy of the same title, whether his or another's, extant in 1584. Consequently, even before the play popularised the name, it was in use as a Christian name in England.

Another name on the list is that of Francis Hodgson. Himself a writer of verse and translator of Juvenal, he was one of Byron's most intimate friends in his early days, and visited at Newstead in 1808. Byron was exceedingly attached to him, and in his first will, made in 1811, left his friend one-third of his personal property. Two years later he gave him a thousand pounds in cash, to enable him to marry comfortably and restore to an equilibrium his finances, which he had upset by paying his father's debts. In 1816, when Hodgson had just been appointed Vicar of Bakewell, Byron wrote to Tom Moore at Mayfield in the following terms:—

"I hear that Hodgson is your neighbour, having a living in Derbyshire. You will find him an excellent-hearted fellow, as well as one of the cleverest; a little, perhaps, too much japanned by preferment in the Church

and the tuition of youth, as well as inoculated with the disease of domestic felicity, besides being overrun with fine feelings about woman and constancy —that small change of Love, which people exact so rigidly, receive in such counterfeit coin, and repay in baser metal—but otherwise a very worthy man."

Hodgson, later on, wrote a warm, but ineffectual, letter of appeal to Lady Byron, begging her not to leave her husband. In 1836 he was appointed Archdeacon of Derby; in 1838 he was given the living of Edensor in addition, and in 1840 became Headmaster of Eton. He died in 1852, at the age of seventy-one.

Outside in the churchyard is the famous Saxon cross, one of the most beautiful of its kind. It has suffered the loss of its head and the arms are damaged, but the shaft is almost uninjured. The sides are ornamented with the usual scroll design: the front and the reverse with sculptures illustrating scenes from the life of Christ. Bakewell churchyard also contains a number of curious epitaphs, of which by far the best is that which laments the death, in 1815, of Philip Roe, the parish clerk.

"The vocal powers here let us mark
Of Philip, our late parish clerk.
In church none ever heard a layman
With a clearer voice say, 'Amen.'
Who now with Hallelujah's sound
Like him can make the roofs rebound?
The choir laments his choral tones,
The town—so soon here lie his bones.
Sleep undisturbed within thy peaceful shrine
Till angels wake thee with such notes as thine!"

Philip's father, so the neighbouring stone tells us, had also been clerk for thirty-five years, and died in 1792.

We get an interesting peep into the social life of Bakewell, as it was a century and a quarter ago, from the rough notes which Mr. White Watson—not the statuary, but his father—jotted down in his diary for 1774. The current of existence flowed

very smoothly, for we are expressly told that "on Sundays all went to church, and there was not a dissenting voice in Bakewell. All prayed to one God and Lord Jesus Christ and drank in social parties 'Success to Church and King.'" Everyone, in short, was content to say his prayers in the church on the hill-side. The Duke of Rutland's agent was "John Baker, Esq."; the over-looker of the river was plain Mr. Smith, and if any of the principal inhabitants desired "a dish of fish for any particular occasion," he had only to say so, and Mr. Smith would send round a very fine basket of trout at the rate of sixpence a pound. Mr. and Mrs. Pidcock kept the Post Office; George Stainforth rode post, and went to Chesterfield three times a week to meet the London mails. His charge was fourpence a letter, but Hannah Handcock, who delivered the letters in Bakewell itself, claimed another halfpenny each for her pains.

There were several social clubs, the principal one being a card club for the *élite* of the town, who paid sixpence a night for liquor and threepence for a Welsh rarebit. The club season opened on the first Thursday in September and closed on the first Thursday in May, and the Vicar of Bakewell, the Rev. Peter Walthall, used to grace the company and preside over breaking-up nights. The members, we are told, "met joyously, smoked their pipes, conversed freely, and left a card table for those that chose to play." But as it was expressly stipulated that "there must be no interruption of conversation by the card party," convivial talk was evidently the primary object of the gathering. Twenty years later, when Dr. William Mayor visited Bakewell in 1798, and stayed at the White Horse—"an indifferent inn," he says, "in a town still more ordinary" he amused himself, while his supper was being made ready, by reading the printed regulations of a club that met weekly at the inn. The last rule exhorted the members "not to get drunk or talk politics—for the glory of God and the honour of the town of Bakewell." Doubtless

this was the same club of which White Watson wrote. There were also in 1774 three "Oister Clubs"—oysters must have been a considerable delicacy in an inland town during the eighteenth century—and a Bachelors' Club, which met privately at the house of a Mr. Samuel Rose, who used to preside at their "very jolly meetings." But of the bumpers which these very jolly bachelors of Bakewell drained, of the toasts they honoured and of the songs they sang—no word has survived. The White Horse itself, which stood a few doors down on the road to Ashford, has vanished and left no trace.

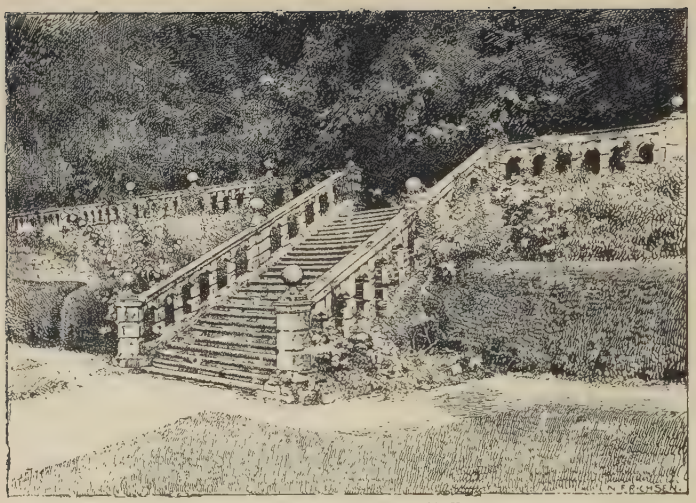
But even in happy Bakewell troubles arose now and then which broke the smooth surface into ripples. One such occasion was in 1796. In those days the Militia Ballot Act was in operation, and the villagers round Bakewell had got it into their heads that Derbyshire was required to raise more men or pay a larger quota than other counties. And so they marched into Bakewell and made what we should call a demonstration. One market day, therefore, while the farmers' ordinary was in full swing at the White Horse, the waitress, Sally Stevenson, came running into the room in great excitement, exclaiming, "The mob is coming—the mob!" But the farmers stolidly went on eating their dinner as though nothing unusual were taking place, for it was "thought proper that no one should notice the mob." And, after all, it was a very small mob, not more than forty strong, armed, not with muskets, but with clubs and spades, and they passed the White Horse and went on to the Town Hall, where speeches were delivered. The worst threat uttered was that they would return on the day the magistrates met to hold the ballot, and not a pennyworth of damage was done. Then they returned to the White Horse, asked the landlady, Mrs. Smith, to lend them a frying-pan – which she did—and called for a pint of ale each, for which they paid. Bakewell was not the least bit terrified or impressed, but looked on and enjoyed the joke.

Matters, however, took a more serious turn when the magistrates met, for then a much larger mob poured into the town, with contingents from Castleton, Eyam, and other places several miles off. This time they forced their way into the room where the officers and magistrates were sitting, and searched the pockets of some of them. Gathering up all the papers and lists of men liable to serve in the Militia, they burnt them in a pile before the windows of the White Horse. Bakewell was scandalised and offended at the outrage, and the gentlemen of the town waited on the magistrates and offered to be sworn in as special constables. The magistrates, however, preferred to apply for the protection of a squadron of cavalry at their next meeting. So when the mob put in a third appearance it was promptly dispersed by the mounted troops, who took six prisoners and marched them off the next day to Chesterfield gaol. Afterwards the cavalry were withdrawn and a company of the Roxburgh Fencibles was sent instead. Their Quarter-Master arrived, curiously enough, while a public banquet was being held at the White Horse to celebrate the opening of a new ring of eight bells for the Parish Church—a banquet at which, according to White Watson, the gentleman had a "joyous day." The Fencibles were quartered in the town and neighbourhood for some months, "behaved themselves exceedingly well," and the threat implied by their presence was effective, for we hear of no more rioting. The incident, however, had one important result for Bakewell. The Epiphany Quarter Sessions were removed to Derby, and remained there in spite of constantly renewed protests from the people of Bakewell.

The eight new bells, which the gentry of the town celebrated with joyousness at the White Horse, were cast by T. Mears and weighed 79 cwt. 2 qrs. 17 lbs. Each bell has its rhyme of two or four lines, but for the eighth, a local poet, Mr. Michael Williams, wrote the following excellent inscription;—

"Possessed of deep sonorous tone
This Belfry King sits on his throne;
And when the merry bells go round,
Adds to and mellows every sound.
So in a just and well poised state
Where all degrees possess due weight,
One greater power, one greater tone
Is ceded to improve their own."

Tradition—wrong as usual—says that the first peal rung on these bells was to celebrate the battle of the Nile in 1798. They had been hanging nearly two years when Nelson beat the French in Aboukir Bay.



The Terrace, Haddon Hall.

CHAPTER XVIII

HADDON HALL: OVER CALTON HILL TO EDENSOR

Two miles to the south-east of Bakewell on the road to Derby lies Haddon Hall, the most picturesque survival to be found—though you search all England through—of the home of an English nobleman in the centuries gone by. Everyone knows what face Haddon wears. Its garden front, its terrace, its broad flight of steps are familiar the world over, thanks to the photographers who carried them into the shop windows and so started the cult of Haddon Hall. It lies on the left bank of the sinuous Wye, securely built on escarpments of the limestone, which here juts out from a hillside thickly covered with delightful trees. And the house itself is built on the slope, one quadrangle above the other, adding enormously to the picturesqueness of the whole.

We are so accustomed to hear Haddon praised that it is difficult to understand how anyone at any time could see it

without pleasure or speak of it without enthusiasm. Yet when Horace Walpole was at Chatsworth in 1760 and visited Haddon as one of the sights of the neighbourhood, he dismissed it in the most cursory manner as "an abandoned old castle of the Rutlands in a romantic situation, but which could never have composed a tolerable dwelling." Walpole was a virtuoso of the most fastidious taste—though his passion for Gothic carried him into strange extravagances—but he was by no means chary of praise when he liked a thing, and if he thought thus contemptuously of Haddon, we may be sure that others thought the same. Let us quote one other adverse verdict, from a man who very fairly represented the ideas of his age. This is what the artist Dayes says of Haddon:—"Not anything can show in so strong a point of view the improved condition of Society as this Hall, the poorest person at present possessing apartments not only more convenient, but at the same time better secured against the severity of the weather. Excepting the Gallery, all the rooms are dark and uncomfortable. They convey but a low idea of the taste of our ancestors or of their domestic pleasures, yet was this place for ages considered as the very seat of magnificence." It would occur to no one to write in that strain now, and yet if Dayes were challenged to maintain the literal truth of his statements, would his task be so very difficult? The Rutlands abandoned Haddon for Belvoir in 1702. At least, that was the last year in which the family were in residence, though the hall was not actually dismantled of its furniture until 1730. The reason of their departure was the prosaic one given by Dayes and Walpole, that Haddon was an uncomfortable place to live in. It would drive the best of modern housekeepers to distraction. Yet what do we not owe to the family pride of the Dukes of Rutland in their wonderful old home, which has led them to keep it in constant repair against the ravages of Time, instead of allowing it to go to rack and ruin? Haddon Hall is good for many centuries yet, for no other abandoned house in the

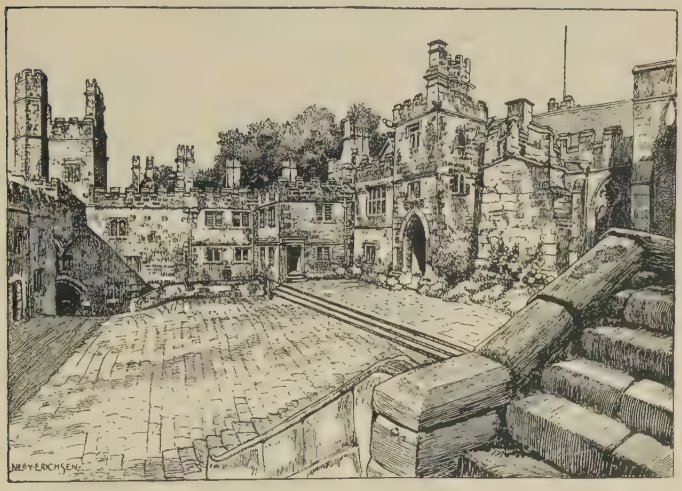
British Isles is so carefully and so lovingly tended. Jealous watch is kept for any sign of decay, and when any repairs are made in wood-work or glass-work, it is always with old material, carefully sought for and skilfully applied.

Let us glance very briefly at its story. The lucky Peverils owned the estate in early Norman days. From them it passed to the Avenels, then by marriage to the Vernons and the

The Eagle Tower, Haddon Hall.

Bassetts, and finally to the Vernons alone. Haddon Hall, as we know it, is practically the handiwork of the Vernons, who dwelt here for four hundred years. You may see their arms over the north-west entrance ; their crest was the boar's head, their motto, "Let Vernon flourish." These Vernons were great people in their own district ; but they played a comparatively small part on the broader stage of national history, though one was Speaker of the Commons, Captain of Rouen, and Treasurer of Calais ; another was Knight Constable of England ; and another shrewdly consulted his safety by joining

neither side in the Wars of the Roses. Tradition says that young Prince Arthur, the elder brother of Henry VIII., spent much of his time at Haddon, but the associations of the place are surprisingly few. Not being castellated or fortified, Haddon escaped the perilous vicissitudes of siege and storm, and probably owes its survival to this very circumstance. The last of the Vernons was Sir George (1508–1567), known to his



The Great Court, Haddon Hall.

contemporaries on account of his magnificence as the King of the Peak, and still more famed as the father of the Dorothy Vernon whose marriage with John Manners carried Haddon Hall into the Rutland family. It was a grandson of theirs who succeeded his cousin, the 7th Earl of Rutland, in the earldom in 1641. He was on the Parliament side during the Civil War and spent most of his time at Haddon during its continuance, for Belvoir lay in the full path of the tempest, and more than once changed hands. This was the Earl who built the road-bridge over the Wye below the Hall. The

ninth Earl and first Duke (cr. 1703) constructed the handsome bowling green on the hillside; the third Duke started the famous Belvoir pack of hounds and was the father of the dashing Marquis of Granby who led the cavalry charge at Minden; the fourth Duke was the friend of Pitt and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He was a hard rider, a deep drinker, and a big eater—it is recorded that he often ate seven or eight turkey eggs for breakfast—what wonder that he died at thirty-four? The fifth Duke won the Derby with Cadland after a dead-heat with The Colonel: the sixth never married and was content with a foxhunter's renown. The present Duke—the Lord John Manners of several Tory Administrations—succeeded in 1888, and no one in the peerage bears a more stainless or more honoured name.

We have said that Haddon is disappointing in its associations. It is sorry work, therefore, destroying a pretty legend, which those who know how the spirit of romance broods over these ancient walls are naturally anxious to believe. This is the story which relates how Dorothy, the second daughter of Sir George Vernon, the King of the Peak, was betrothed against her will to Edward Stanley, a younger son of the third Earl of Derby, and the brother of Sir Thomas Stanley who married her elder sister, Margaret. But Dorothy was in love with young John Manners, a younger son of the Earl of Rutland, who disguised himself as a forester and haunted the Haddon woods to see his lady. There was to have been a double wedding of the two brothers and two sisters, but, on the marriage eve, Dorothy slipped away from the ballroom, stole out of the side door and down the little flight of steps, and eloped with her waiting lover. So runs the story. Unfortunately, no reference to it in print occurs until about 1820, and the earlier writers who visited and described Haddon knew nothing of it. It seems to have grown up out of the fact that Dorothy Vernon was married not at Bakewell, as her sister was, but, according to an ancient tradition in the family,

at Aylestone, near Leicester, one of the Rutland manors. The reason is not known, though it is tempting to suppose that it was due to the Vernons being Catholics and the Manners Protestants. That might possibly account for Sir George Vernon not wishing the wedding to take place at Bakewell, even supposing that he gave it his sanction. In birth and rank a Manners was no whit the inferior of a Vernon, and, religion apart, there seems no cause for Sir George to have opposed the match. But whether Dorothy eloped or not, she certainly was not disinherited by her father.

The vogue of the Dorothy Vernon legend was popularised by a lady named Eliza Meteyard, who affected for literary purposes the more euphonious name of "Silverpen," and wrote a short tale called *Dorothy Vernon* of more than glucose stickiness and sweetness. Let me give a very short specimen of her style, selecting for that purpose the concluding sentences wherein she introduces into English fiction for the first time the Dorothy Vernon door and steps.

"And now withdrawing bolt and bar, she kissed the weeping beldam, and like a frightened bird upon the wing, made eleven small prints upon the eleven stone steps, light as snow upon a flower, as dew upon a rose, and the prize was caught as a leaflet by the wintry wind and borne away. So then, as yet for aye, those little tiny steps were graven and set down like iron in a rock, like a mountain on the land, like an ocean on the earth, for Time can be no victor over Human Love. And so the shadows and the sunlight fall, the winter winds roar around, the sere leaves drop, the damp and mould linger, and the lichens grow, but yet the sweet tradition hallows Haddon Hall."

In 1822 there had appeared in the *London Magazine* a short story called *The King of the Peak*, written by Allan Cunningham, and in 1823 a long novel with the same title by Mr. Lee Gibbons. A more unutterably tedious effusion in three volumes never saw the light; not a single character is alive and the whole production is wooden to the last degree. Here is a fair example of the dialogue between Dorothy at her window and John Manners below:—

"Be at rest, sweet Dorothy," returned her lover; "suffer not the image of this evil genius to disturb thee. If Sir George be warm and peremptory, he is yet a father and will not force thy inclination. But why wilt thou not set me at rest, and danger at defiance, by giving thyself up to my entreaty? Thou hast but to leap into my arms and all doubts and fears and apprehensions are over. Believe me, my love, it must come to this at last."

"Hush, my beloved!" replied Dorothy, in a calm tone: "do my ears no violence! Let other lovers place their felicity in the gratification of sense, but let our enjoyments be pure, unalloyed by mixing with baser passions. That I love thee beyond all that I can express, beyond all that hath a signification in language, I do not blush to confess, for thou art worthy, oh, most worthy to be beloved. But though thou art thus knit to my soul and I breathe not a jot of life which does not include some portion of thee, though to live without seeing thee daily and to forbear our sweet communion, would nigh go to weary me of life, yet I durst not, I could not, I will not so stain my honour—the honour of a noble house—as to quit the mansion of my fathers clandestinely. No, dear love, I should fear to encounter the armed shades of my stern ancestors, and that they would repel with scorn the flight of their unworthy descendant. Time covereth the shorn lamb. Time healeth the anguish of the heart. We must have patience."

Three volumes of this trash and yet the pretty legend survived it! What a marvellous tribute to the imperishability of romance! Several English novelists in the intervening years have made use of the story, but without much success, and even Sir Arthur Sullivan's opera on this familiar theme was an undeniable failure. It is Haddon itself which has immortalised Dorothy Vernon.

We will not attempt to describe in detail the interior of Haddon. The Chapel is of all manner of styles, from Norman to Jacobean—but this is the charm of every nook and corner that its owners of one century added to the fabric of the century preceding without ruthless destruction. The banqueting hall and the great cavernous kitchens and larders suggest rude plenty, draughty meals, and lukewarm dishes; the dais for the high table—worm-eaten witness of many a joyous feast—is raised only a few inches above the level of the floor; the side gallery is of late construction, designed to give passage from the living rooms above to the sleeping apartments without descending into the hall. One can understand

why Sir George Vernon, the magnificent, began the great structural changes which his daughter and her husband carried to completion. By the middle of the sixteenth century the standard of domestic comfort had profoundly changed, and families began to prefer dining in the privacy of their own rooms without the clatter and noise of a bustling household. Sir George Vernon built the beautifully panelled private dining-room at the back of the daïs; above it, approached by a staircase out of the hall, is his tapestry covered drawing-room, and leading out of this are the so-called Earl's Apartments overlooking the gardens.

But the glory of Haddon is the Long Gallery planned by Sir George Vernon and completed by John Manners, whose crest, the peacock, is seen on the frieze by the side of the boar's head of the Vernons. The gallery is 110 feet long by 17 feet wide, most elaborately wainscotted throughout, with a wonderful plaster ceiling adorned with squares, lozenges, and quatrefoils with highly decorated and foliated points. The oak is of a beautiful silver-grey colour, and the gallery itself, unlike the other apartments of Haddon, is flooded with light. On the garden side are three bay windows and recesses, the centre one being 15 feet by 11 feet 6 inches; a window with diamond panes stretches full across the further end of the gallery; and there are windows again on the north wall, on either side of the solitary fireplace. Other galleries of the Elizabethan or early Jacobean period are considerably longer than the Haddon gallery—those, for example, at Hardwick, Montacute, and Parham, to mention only three—but none has greater charm.

The State bedchambers and the mouldering finery of the bed in which George IV., when Prince Regent, was the last sleeper do not stir me. The coverlet was worked by Katherine, wife of the last Earl and first Duke of Rutland, but the bed belongs rather to Belvoir than to Haddon, and was not brought to Haddon until after the disastrous fire at Belvoir in 1816. The Eagle or Peveril Tower, however, is worth the climb for

The Garden Front, Haddon Hall.

the view it yields over the leads of the whole mansion. Then one passes out into the gardens through the door and down

the staircase which are the reputed scene of Dorothy Vernon's flight. One at least can be sure of this—that if Dorothy did elope while the viols and rebecks were sounding in the Long Gallery, and if this door and these steps were in existence at the time, then this is the door and these are the steps by which she probably fled. But he must be very unimaginative who requires a legend to add any extraneous charm to so lovely a spot as the gardens of Haddon Hall. They have been cleverly laid out in terraces on the hillside. The topmost one consists of a broad avenue of sycamores; below it is the Winter Garden, 180 feet by 80 feet, divided into grass plots with ancient yew trees at the corners of the walks. A broad walk runs along the side at right angles to the house, with the famous stone balustrade, 3 feet high, dividing it from the garden below, which is called—oddly enough—the Upper Garden. Midway is the picturesque flight of twenty-six steps, and at the further end of the terrace is a stone summer house, recently restored, from which in old days there was an exit into the fields. The Upper Garden, 120 feet square and extending along the greater part of the south front, was the chief one, and it is from here that the favourite and most familiar views of Haddon are taken. The Lower Garden is reached by short flights of steps and is also steeply terraced down the hill side.

If from Haddon our way lies towards Rowsley we turn leftwards round the foot of the rocky bluff on which the Hall is built. The grey towers are soon lost to sight and the trees of the meadows deny a satisfactory backward view. We do not cross the ancient narrow foot-bridge—centuries older than the road-bridge and the road by the river side—but continue by the side of the winding river, which here curls and twists into repeated "esses"—to borrow a delightful word which ought never to have been allowed to drop into disuse—as it flows through these pleasant meads. The path runs out all too soon into the dusty high road, along which we needs must tramp a

longish mile before we reach the outskirts of Rowsley. It is a road which the pedestrian avoids in summer, unless he can bear with stoicism suffocating clouds of dust.

But if your way happen to lie towards Edensor and Chatsworth, you will be wise to forsake the Wye and cross the hill with me. We leave Haddon by mounting the hillside at the back of the old stables and the rose-bowered cottage, to the fine avenue of trees which forms the approach to the Bowling Green. This spacious green has little place in the ancient history of Haddon Hall, for it was only laid out just before the family quitted Haddon for Belvoir. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, it was maintained by the Duke of Rutland of that day for the pleasure of "the gentleman of Bakewell and the neighbourhood," most of whom were his tenants. It is enclosed by a handsome wall of solid construction, with iron gates at the head of a broad, stone staircase. On the further side is a substantial stone house built for a pavilion. But it is long since a Jack was thrown, or a bowl was sent spinning over the close-cropped turf. Rhodes, writing in 1816, says: "the place was totally neglected and the rank grass everywhere prevailed," though only a few years before it had been occasionally well attended in the summer months. Now the pavilion is a farmhouse and the bowling green is a tidy orchard and vegetable garden.

Leaving the bowling green on our right hand, we keep to a steadily ascending lane, which, in the old days, before the road in the valley was built, was the main approach to Haddon both from Rowsley and Bakewell. As we reach the open ground a fine backward view may be had across to Youlgreave, Stanton-in-the-Peak, and the dip of the Rowsley valley. A green lane branches off on our right, as we enter upon a narrow ridge. To the left is a deep valley looking towards Bakewell and the hills beyond; on the Rowsley side the prospect is not so open. At the further side of the ridge an old road—from Rowsley to Bakewell—winds down the valley,

Emery Walker sc.

and this we cross to a gate at the edge of the Manners Wood facing us. As we mount through this by a steep cart-track, the view towards Bakewell grows in magnificence and we begin to overlook the wooded ridge above Haddon. Beyond Bakewell we get the ridges of Buxton and High Peak: beyond Haddon the clumps which mark the eminences of the Hartington and Newhaven districts; and beyond Stanton the heights of Winster. When our path nears the summit and reaches a group of tall ash trees, the track turns sharply up by the side of a young plantation and we are at the top. Here is a stone wall, by the side of which we continue along the ridge for about two hundred yards till we come to a gate, and turning through this, slant across the field diagonally to a clump of beech trees. The field is part of an unexpected strip of rich meadow-land, the whole plateau being known as the Calton Pastures, spreading out into Lees Moor and ending in the Lindup Wood. A number of kists have been found close by, and the name of Calton, or Caerlton, suggests remote antiquity.

This beech plantation, through which we now pass, is one of my favourite Derbyshire clumps. The trees are stately and tall; set wide apart so that they do not interfere one with another; and their dark and glossy columns rise up smoothly for many feet before they begin to throw off branches. The clump, like every other spacious wood, is seen at its best when there is strong sunshine beating down upon it, sunshine which finds it hard to penetrate through the dark leaves and creates a kind of luminous shade which is cool alike to the eye and to the cheek. But at any time and at any season this little wood makes its strong appeal and helps one to realise what prompted the men of an earlier time to set up their gods in groves and worship their deities among trees on the hill tops. The wood creates a sense of awe; suggesting a latent presence, lying closely hidden, though we seem ever to be just on the point of alighting upon it and recognising it. It is in such

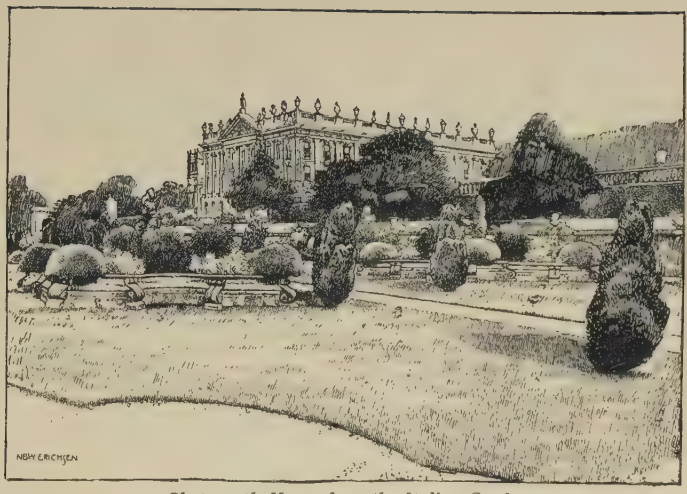
a wood as this that one has a revelation of the real meaning of the words which the rustic Evander spoke to Aeneas :—

> " *Hoc nemus, hunc, inquit, frondoso vertice clivum,*
> *Quis deus, incertum est—habitat deus. Arcades ipsum*
> *Credunt se vidisse Jovem, cum saepe nigrantem*
> *Aegida concuteret dextra nimbosque cieret.*"

When you quit the beeches you find you are looking down on a long valley which broadens towards the Derwent, with the village of Beeley at the far extremity. Below, but hidden from sight, is a group of buildings known as Calton Houses. Opposite, across the valley, a belt of trees fringes the upper side of Chatsworth Park with a keeper's picturesque house on the right—the Russian Cottage, a favourite luncheon place for the Chatsworth shooting parties. The path here is practically undecipherable. You can either aim at a point a quarter of a mile from the Russian Cottage and trust to chance to keep your direction, or—better still—descend the hill among the thorn trees making straight for the cottage. This soon is lost to view, but you speedily strike the angle of a wall, and farm buildings come into sight. Turn leftwards to a little wood and you will see a stone stile in a wall, just below a water trough in the open. Cross the stile, and pass by the side of a small dam and through some rhododendron bushes out to the farm entrance. Then turn leftwards through the gate, and then to the right for some distance by the wall-side. The path reaches the open, passes over a green drive, and runs up to a gate in the wall, with the Russian Cottage a few hundred yards on the right. This gate—where used to be a wooden step-stile—leads through a narrow belt of trees to another gate, and lo, we are on the edge of Chatsworth Park with a superb —perhaps the very best obtainable—view of the House itself, of the bridge and the Hunting Tower on the further slope. The gate is by the side of a young plantation, and those who take the walk in the reverse direction should be careful not to confuse it with another gate a hundred yards or so more to the

left of the plantation as they approach it from Chatsworth or Edensor. From here our way is obvious.

Edensor itself, lying just below, does not call for many words. It is a model village—each house more like a villa than a cottage, carefully tended, scrupulously clean,—a monument of what a good landlord can do who has a pride in his property, and an interest in his tenants which does not confine itself to their strict payment of rent. One homestead, the only one on the Chatsworth side of the road through the Park, is different in character from all the rest. This for many generations belonged to a family of sturdy yeomen who refused to sell to their great neighbour. One can imagine the pride they would take in saying "No," and—we will be bound—in voting Tory. But the Dukes waited and waited, and their chance came at last. Edensor church is a modern building on the site of an old one. Its spire is renowned; the interior is rather disappointing and dark, the monuments few. A brass to John Beton, a nephew of the Cardinal and a confidential servant of Mary Queen of Scots, is of some interest, and so is an elaborate monument of the first Earl of Devonshire, who died in 1616. This grandiose memorial is in the sharpest contrast with the simple tombs of his successors, outside at the top of the churchyard, surrounded by a bank of rhododendrons, and with a few graceful cypresses among the graves. After death the lords of Chatsworth make no boast of their dignities. Here in this quiet spot lies Lord Frederick Cavendish, the victim of the most outrageous political assassination in the British Isles during the last century, with nothing more than the date of the tragedy, May 6th, 1882, on the simplest of headstones. It is a noble reticence, worthy of his house.



Chatsworth House from the Italian Garden.

CHAPTER XIX

CHATSWORTH

CHATSWORTH—both House and Park—is usually described in superlatives, and for once the language of seeming exaggeration is not ill employed. For, all things considered, Chatsworth is perhaps the most beautiful as well as the most imposing of the great houses and great parks of England. The situation is perfection. The wide rolling moors spread away high above it and behind it to the east. They break into woods at their edge—beautiful woods where every tree seems to find just the soil and sustenance it needs—and then they dip in sharp, yet not steep, declivity to the rich parkland in which Chatsworth stands, with the Derwent flowing pleasantly through the mid-valley. Along the left bank of the river, from the Baslow entrance to the Park to the bridge near Beeley, this exquisite range of woods continues, while on the right bank the ground is less regular in outline, and

rises more gradually up to the plateau dividing Chatsworth from Haddon. Yet here too, as one looks down from such a vantage spot as the Wellington Monument above Baslow, the main impression is of woods, and the whole valley looks a green vista of delight. Cotton, as we saw in an earlier chapter, compared it to a diamond set in the "ignoble jet" of the moors.

> "To view from hence the glittering pile above
> (Which must at once wonder create and love)
> Environed round with Nature's shames and ills,
> Black heaths, wild rocks, bleak crags and naked hills,
> And the whole prospect so informe and rude,
> Who is it but must presently conclude
> That this is Paradise, which seated stands
> In midst of desarts and of barren sands.
> So a bright diamond would look, if set
> In a vile socket of ignoble jet,
> And such a face the new-born Nature took
> When out of Chaos by the Fiat strook."

It was this remarkable contrast between the rich luxuriance of the Derwent valley and the barren moors between it and Chesterfield—the usual road of approach—that impressed most visitors to Chatsworth in the old days. The sudden descent into the smiling valley was as astonishing to them as the towers of Venice rising from the waste of waters.

> "As to th' astonished seaman's startled sight
> The city Venice midst the waves appears,
> Unlooked for thus, midst many a mountain height,
> The Devoninian Hall its towers uprears."

So sang Colley Cibber in his most Cibberian vein; but precisely the same sense of contrast struck Wordsworth too:

> "Chatsworth! thy stately mansion and the pride
> Of thy domain, strange contrast do present
> To house and home in many a craggy rent
> Of the wild Peak: where new-born waters glide
> Through fields whose thrifty occupants abide
> As in a dear and chosen banishment
> With every semblance of entire content.

And we must also quote Hobbes' tribute to the beauty of the spot where he spent so many years as the honoured recipient of Cavendish hospitality:

> "*Stat Chatsworth praeclara domus, tum mole superba*
> *Tum Domino, magnis: celerem Deroentis ad undam*
> *Miranti similis portam praeterfluit amnis,*
> *Hic tacitus, saxis infra supraque sonorus.*
> *At mons terga domus rapidis defendit ab Euris,*
> *Ostendens longe exertis juga consita saxis,*
> *Praesectoque die, producens tempora somni*
> *Summovet a tergo rupes gratissimus hortus,*
> *Pinguis odoratis ubi tellus floribus halat:*
> *Arbor ubi in mediis silvis, sibi libera visa,*
> *Dat fructus injussa suos; ubi frondea tecta*
> *Arboreis praebent invito frigora sole*
> *Porticibus, potiora tuae, Maro, tegmine fagi.*"

It is not, of course, the present Chatsworth House which Hobbes describes as the pleasantest lodging ever offered to the Muses. The Chatsworth he knew was the Chatsworth which Bess of Hardwick built and where Mary Queen of Scots dwelt as a prisoner. Of that mansion practically nothing remains, for the new one was built on the old site. However, Queen Mary's Bower has happily been spared. It stands below the House, close to the bridge over the Derwent, a grey stone building, to which access is obtained by a flight of thirty steps rising over a moat of varying width. Two old yew trees growing within the bower throw their shade over the entrance gate, a third flourishes in a corner, and in the centre stands a fine sycamore with spreading branches. Over the gate and fixed to a stone shield is an iron plate displaying the arms of the Scottish Queen, the quarterings showing the lilies of France and the lions of Scotland and England. No spot could be more romantic, built up from the placid moat three or four feet at its deepest, surmounted with its crown of foliage and haunted with memories of the Queen of Scots. It is said that the bower was built specially for her, and tradition speaks

of an underground passage connecting it with the House. But this subterranean way is merely a drain, and as the Queen was allowed more liberty at Chatsworth than elsewhere, it is hard to see why she should have been shut up in this bower. The moat was originally one of the fish-ponds of the old mansion, and, a few yards away, a relic of an ancient orchard may be seen in an aged apple tree, a hollow trunk with one decrepit arm, yet still struggling to put forth fruit in its season.

The Queen of Scots was frequently at Chatsworth, for her keeper, the Earl of Shrewsbury, had been very anxious to be permitted to take her thither. The mansion was only just completed, and therefore likely to be far more comfortable than the draughty Tutbury, and, besides, he was less apprehensive of danger there owing to the remoteness of its situation. There was, he wrote to Burghley in 1577, "no town of resorte" in the neighbourhood "where any ambusher might lye." Mary was first taken to Chatsworth in 1570, and she went in high hopes, for Elizabeth was speaking her fair, and her prospects of regaining her liberty were at the moment very good. During the summer the Queen sent down from London her trusty counsellor, Sir William Cecil, and Sir Walter Mildmay, her Chancellor of Exchequer, and they with their trains of servants were hospitably entertained by the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury at Chatsworth House. Mary's advisers were also there, and, after lengthy negotiations, the draft of a treaty was drawn up and the captive hoped that she would soon be setting out for the North. But the weeks and months passed, and the treaty was never ratified. New circumstances arose on the field of foreign politics, new developments took place in Scotland, which led Queen Elizabeth to modify her plans. It no longer suited her interests that Mary should be set at liberty, and Mary, therefore, remained under watch and guard. At the close of November she was removed to Sheffield, and Sheffield Castle and Sheffield Manor—both the property of the broad-acred

Queen Mary's Bower, Chatsworth.

Shrewsbury—became for the next fourteen years her chief places of residence. She was at Chatsworth again in 1573, 1577, 1578, 1579, and 1581, arriving each time with diminishing hope of liberty, but committing herself just as eagerly and recklessly as ever to any wild fantastic project for her escape. Poor Queen Mary! History condemns her; Poetry idealises her beauty, her suffering and her weakness. One thinks of her at Chatsworth in her Bowery as Ronsard saw her:—

Je vy des Escossois la royne sage et belle,
Qui de corps et d'esprit ressemble une immortelle;
J'approchay de ses yeux, mais bien de deux soleils,
Deux soleils de beauté qui non point leurs pareils,
Je les vy larmoyer d'une claire rosée,
Je vy d'un beau crystal sa paupière arrosée
Se souvenant de France et du sceptre laissée
Et de son premier feu comme un songe passé.

During the Civil Wars Chatsworth was garrisoned first for the Parliament by Sir John Gell, then for the King by Colonel Eyre. In 1645 Colonel Shalcross held it with a detachment of three hundred Royalist horse from Welbeck Abbey and successfully withstood a short siege conducted by the Dutchman, Mollanus. Shalcross vacated it when the King's standard went down. The mansion was rebuilt by the fourth Earl of Devonshire, who was raised to the dignity of a Dukedom in 1694. The work was begun in 1687 and completed in 1706, a year before his death. The Earl was banished from the Court of James II. in 1685 for brawling with an old enemy of his, Colonel Colepeper, in the Palace at Whitehall. High words passed and Colepeper struck the Earl, who promptly knocked him down. For this he was fined the outrageous sum of £30,000 by James' subservient judges. His mother, the Dowager Countess, offered for "her son Billy" bonds for £60,000 which Charles I. had borrowed during the Civil Wars. This was refused, and the Earl fled to Derbyshire, where he took prisoners the officers of the law sent to arrest him. Nevertheless, he

had to give a bond pledging himself to pay his fine, and the paper was found and destroyed after James II.'s flight. No wonder the Earl favoured the Prince of Orange.

To solace his banishment he sought occupation in building. He seems to have been in residence at Chatsworth during most of these years, despite the inevitable discomforts which such extended operations necessarily entailed, and was driven from room to room as the workmen proceeded with their task. His architect was William Talman, but in 1698 Sir Christopher Wren inspected the plans and surveyed the works. The new house became for a second time a Wonder of the Peak. "Though the situation," said Bishop Kennet, "seems to be somewhat horrid, this really adds to the beauty of it; the glorious house seems to be Art insulting Nature." But Nature in those days lay under a cloud!

Talman's handiwork has had its adverse critics, but his imposing classical design falls graciously enough on the eyes of most observers, especially when seen from the path along the Derwent by the weirs, or from the belt of wood on the high ground above Edensor. The front entrance used to be on the riverside—before Paxton laid out the Italian gardens—up the curious flight of steps, which rise over a grotto and artificial stalactites, little to the modern taste. This, of course, was long before the new wing with the Italian Belvedere was added. Talman had the not uncommon failing of building for show rather than for comfort, and his great inner quadrangular court with open-pillared porticoes meant cold and draughty journeys for the Duke's guests as they sought their rooms. Twenty-two pillars stood in the porticoes, each surmounted by a stone bust of some forgotten celebrity of the days of Queen Anne, and these, when the alterations were made by the sixth Duke, were set up outside in the French garden, where they now look strangely lost. Many of the outside stone statues which adorn the grounds were the work of Cibber, the father of the playwright poet-

laureate. He was engaged for many years at Chatsworth on the stone carving, and the statues—none too successful, though Time has not dealt very kindly with them—on the bridge are said to be his. Another artist in stone was Samuel Watson, of Heanor, who worked for twenty years on the festoons, urns, mask heads, and the arms in the pediment. He settled in Bakewell, and his son Henry in 1763 carved the arms on the front of the Chatsworth stables.

The first Duke laid out large sums of money upon the gardens of Chatsworth and especially upon the fountains, cascades, and waterworks, which are among the curiosities of the place. An interesting passage relating to the gardens occurs in a letter written by Sir Godfrey Copley in 1703. We will quote it in full:—

"I lay at Chesterfield on Monday and went over the Moors to Chatsworth. I spent near two hours in the gardens, where my Lord, I find, hath laid out a good deal since you and I were there. He hath pulled up the cascade with design to make it much larger. If he would bring it down in broken water and froth from the top of the hill among these stones and then let it into a smooth sheet when it comes into his garden, it would be very fine and outdo Marli. He hath made on the back of the house a fine green house, and square pond before it, with a sort of island and fountain in the middle. But his chief work hath been levelling a hill which faced the old front, by which he hath opened a distant prospect to the blue hills and made on the same level with his house and garden a canal, something broader than my new river, but not quite so long. One side of this canal, which goes from the bowling-green, is supported by a tarrass-walk on the right hand; and the ground under that side being very low and marsh-like, is intended to be cut into water and islands for ducks. But one of my Lord's chief designs, as I am told, will be a great one. It is to take the current of the river Derwent half a mile above, and turn it into his great canal, which is below the house and hath a bridge over it, and then let it fall in a great cascade, and go again into its own course below the house."

Sir Godfrey adds that he rode from Chatsworth over the moors to Nottingham—"with much ado and the assistance of my needle." One cannot insist too often on the difficulty of travelling in Derbyshire in the old days.

It was, as we have said, the sixth Duke (1790—1858) who left Chatsworth as we know it to-day by building the new wing and new entrance, and by remodelling, to a very large extent, the grounds. The seventh Duke caused to be cut in marble over the fireplace of the Great Hall an inscription setting forth that this well-beloved ancestral home of the Cavendishes—*ædes has paternas dilectissimas*—was begun in the year of English freedom, 1688, inherited by the sixth Duke in 1811, and completed in 1840, "the year of Sorrow." The last reference was to the death of his own wife, the Countess of Burlington, before his succession in 1858 to the Dukedom—he being the cousin of the sixth Duke, who had never married. The reference to "the year of English liberty," 1688, bears witness to the inveterate Whig traditions of the Dukes of Devonshire. But a much more amusing witness to the Whiggism of the Cavendishes is to be found outside in the grounds. There you may see four drums of an ancient Greek column surmounted, not, as one would suppose, by a statue of Liberty or Victory, but by a bronze bust of the sixth Duke of Devonshire. An appropriate set of verses has been carved around the base.

"These fragments stood on Sunium's aery steep,
They reared aloft Minerva's guardian shrine,
Beneath them rolled the blue Aegean deep,
And the Greek pilot hailed them as divine.

"Such was e'en then their look of calm repose
As wafted round them came the sounds of fight,
When the glad shout of conquering Athens rose
O'er the long track of Persia's broken flight.

"Though clasped by prostrate worshippers no more,
They yet shall breathe a thrilling lesson here,
Though distant from their own immortal shore,
The spot they grace is still to Freedom dear."

Ah, those Whigs! To think of lines in praise of Freedom being written by Lord Morpeth to a Duke of Devonshire in the Palace of the Peak! The marbles were brought to England by

Sir Augustus Clifford, when in command of the warship Euryalus.

The sixth Duke was the patron of Paxton—Sir Joseph Paxton, M.P., as he afterwards became—whose memorial tablet in Edensor Church makes the large claim for him that "through the influence of his work and writing he has added to the charm of gardens in all countries." Paxton was born of poor parents in 1803 at Milton Bryant, in Bedfordshire. As a boy he ran away from an uncongenial apprenticeship and was found on the road by a Quaker named Hooker, who kept the nursery gardens at Chiswick. One of Hooker's patrons was the Duke of Devonshire, who took a fancy to the young gardener and told him casually that, if he wished it, he might have a place at Chatsworth. A few hours later Paxton set off from London in the Yorkshire coach, and arrived at Chesterfield at three in the morning. He walked the nine miles from Chesterfield to Chatsworth, climbed over the wall, reconnoitred the grounds before anyone was stirring, and then presented himself at the housekeeper's room for breakfast. And before the meal was over—so legend saith—he had made up his mind to accept the Duke's offer, to remodel the gardens, and to marry the housekeeper's niece. And so he did. Joseph Paxton was a very clever man, clever himself and clever in making use of other people's cleverness, which is, perhaps, the greatest proof of brains a man can give. He has monopolised all the glory of designing the Crystal Palace—in the Chatsworth district there is a clearly marked feeling that others possessed at least as good a title as he to a share in the *kudos* of its construction. Report speaks of a certain John Marples, who was one of the Duke's agents, an uncultivated genius, after James Brindley's fashion, who knew nothing of science and rules, but could conquer any engineering difficulty by sheer native ability and the application of common sense and experience.

The Great Conservatory at Chatsworth is usually spoken of as the building which suggested the Crystal Palace. That is an

error. The real prototype is the small Lily House, which stands before the head-gardener's villa, by the kitchen garden in the park. Paxton was one day talking with Marples and, pointing to this Lily House, said, "Could you build it from here to Chatsworth?" "Certainly," answered Marples. "Then it's done," said Paxton, and slapped his leg. And so the idea of the Crystal Palace was born. Paxton had the inspiration, but Marples translated it into glass and iron; and when difficulties in the actual construction arose Marples solved them. Nor is it any detraction from Paxton's fame that he should share it with another.

Paxton laid out the Italian gardens fronting the river, and his name is indelibly associated with the whole hundred and twenty-six acres of pleasure grounds, with the Victoria Regia House, and the Great Conservatory. There is, to my mind, a touch of megalomania in this colossal glasshouse, and it only bores me to be told of its miles of piping and its acreage—or is it mileage ?—of glass. The sixth duke used to drive a little carriage with four ponies and outriders through this conservatory, and he had milestones -think of it!—in his garden walks to tell him how far he was from home. This from the Whig noble, whose bust graces a real antique pillar from Sunium! Well, we all have our foibles, and, after all, the sixth duke was devoted to books and art, and, like all the Cavendishes, was a great nobleman and a great gentleman. He made large additions to the library, which dates back in part to the time of Hobbes, and is specially rich in MSS. and in Shakespearian quartos and folios. As for the house itself, which is most generously shown to the curious and thronging public, I have no room to describe its contents, and are they not described in all the books, both great and small? Moreover, I always find that going over these lordly houses —as one of "a party"—is a most chastening experience. You wish to linger, but must not: the guide shepherds you from room to room, and the tired finger

indicates, and the uninterested voice describes, the things in which you take not the least concern. A canoe given by the Sultan! A malachite clock presented by the Emperor Nicholas! A magnificent set of ivory chessmen! *Ohe! Jam satis est!* These things move me not. I always think of the hours I might spend there with the right *cicerone*—at leisure and in quiet.

A winding carriage-drive leads up the hill at the back of the house towards the Hunting Tower, through banks of rhododendrons, fully thirty feet high in places, a gorgeous blaze of colour when they are in bloom. Soon the drive is crossed by a footpath, which takes one to the side of a little runnel, and then leads steeply up long flights of steps, which the less agile had better decline in favour of the drive. The path runs out at the foot of the Hunting Tower, one of the best examples of its kind in the country, an Elizabethan structure, massive and square, with rounded projecting corners, each surmounted by a lead-covered cupola. Approach to the door is given by a flight of ten steps, and above the upper of the two central windows is the pattern of a rose in the stonework, twice repeated. On the strip of sward at its foot is a battery of old eight-pounders, some on iron, some on wooden carriages, which are fired on great occasions. The view from the Tower is delightful. It shows the whole extent of the noble park, the mansion below, Edensor in the fold of the opposite hill, Pilsley to the right and the high ground over towards Buxton, the valley of the Derwent towards Stony Middleton and Grindleford, Baslow and its woods, and the fine outline of Baslow and Curbar Edge.

In days gone by the ladies of the great house used to watch the chase from the upper windows of the Hunting Tower; now the top of the hill is given up to woods and game preserves. Here, too, lie the lakes, the largest of which works the great Emperor Fountain below, a perfect Paradise for wild fowl, and ringed with fine trees. Green drives branch off on either

side, with long avenues of choice firs. Among them you may wander at will, so you but keep to the paths and drives, and there is no shadow of excuse to quit them, for they conduct you to the very arcana of the woodlands. Here by a gate-side on a fir-tree's bough, which has suffered from the fury of a storm, some keeper had made his gibbet, displaying the mouldering, mummied carcases of five weasels, hanged ignominiously by the neck till they were dead. By their side dangled a hawk and other birds of prey which I was not naturalist enough to distinguish. On the ground were the fallen feathers of other malefactors, an unsightly wing or two, and a few bleaching bones. One wonders if these gibbets are efficacious. Are the live weasels frightened to repentance as they look on their dead fellows? Do the timid victims of these ferocious little beasts come here in the gloaming and rejoice at the power which has beaten down the proud and tyrannous? Are these warning examples spoken of in the talk of the bird world and the forest people? Are there wise creatures, Nestors and Mentors of their kind, who draw morals for the behoof of inexperienced youth? Who shall say? But they who think on these things cannot do better than linger in the retired woods above Chatsworth House, where one can roam for miles by taking the various walks which present themselves at every turn and side. Specially worth while is it to keep high up and follow along the edge of the woods above the valley, till, beyond a small forest of ancient and decaying oaks, you quit the park through a gate by the Parkgate Farm, and then find yourself on the moorland, with Harland Edge on your left hand. There you reap reward in superb views down into the valley of the Derwent, and across the desolate expanse of Beeley Moor, which itself drops down over Fallinge Edge into a broad terrace of green pastures, and then descends in handsome woods to the level of the stream.

Chatsworth from the Bridge.

CHAPTER XX

CHATSWORTH AND ITS VISITORS

One of the most distinguished residents at Chatsworth in the seventeenth century, more distinguished, perhaps, than the noble owner himself, was Thomas Hobbes, of Malmesbury, author of *The Leviathan* and other treatises of political philosophy, which exercised an extraordinary influence upon the thought of his time. Hobbes had early associations with the Cavendish family, and was for many years the tutor of the young heir who subsequently became the first Duke of Devonshire. When he returned from his long self-imposed exile in France he resumed his curious position in the Cavendish household, which was partly that of guest, partly of dependant; and in his old age—he lived to be ninety-two—hardly stirred out of Derbyshire. His manner of life at Chatsworth is

described in a very curious passage by Bishop Kennet in his *Memorials of the Cavendish Family.*

"His professed rule of health was to dedicate the morning to his health and the afternoon to his studies. And, therefore, at his rising he walked out and climbed any hill within his reach, and if the weather was not dry he fatigued himself within doors by some exercise or other to be in a sweat, recommending that practice upon this opinion: that an old man had more moisture than heat, and, therefore, by such motion heat was to be acquired and moisture expelled. After, he took a comfortable breakfast and then went round the lodgings to wait upon the Earl, the Countess, and the children, and any considerable strangers, paying some short addresses to all of them. He kept these rounds till about twelve o'clock, when he had a little dinner provided for him, which he ate always by himself without ceremony. Soon after dinner he retired to his study and had his candle, with ten or twelve pipes of tobacco, laid by him, then shutting his door he fell to smoking and thinking and writing for several hours. . . . Towards the end of his life he had very few books, and those he read but very little, thinking he was now only to digest what he had formerly fed upon. If company came to visit him he would be free to discourse until he was pressed or contradicted, and then he had the infirmities of being short and peevish and referring to his writings for better satisfaction. His friends, who had the liberty of introducing strangers to him, made these terms with them before their admission, that they should not dispute with the old man nor contradict him."

Another curious reference to Hobbes' capacity for smoking interminable pipes of tobacco is found in a letter written by St. Evremond to the poet Waller. The Frenchman, when visiting England, had travelled down to Chatsworth in order to see Hobbes, just as, a century later, every lettered Englishman visiting France used to seek an interview with Voltaire. St. Evremond begins his letter as follows:—"I now write to you from the Earl of Devonshire's, where I have been this fortnight past, paying my devotions to the Genius of Nature. Nothing can be more romantic than this country except the region about Valois, and nothing can equal this place in beauty but the borders of the lake." Then he goes on to say that what had drawn him to Derbyshire was the desire of seeing, not natural curiosities, but that "moral curiosity, Mr. Hobbes."

"I arrived a little before dinner, notwithstanding which the Earl told me he believed I was too late to see Mr. Hobbes that day. 'As he does not think like other men,' said his lordship, 'it is his opinion that he should not live like other men. I suppose he dined about two hours ago, and he is now shut up for the rest of the day. Your only time to see him is in the morning, but then he walks so fast up those hills that unless you are mounted on one of my ablest hunters you will not keep pace with him.' It was not long before I obtained an audience extraordinary of this literary potentate, whom I found like Jupiter, involved in clouds of his own raising. He was entrenched behind a battery of ten or twelve guns, charged with a stinking combustible called tobacco. Two or three of these he had fired off and replaced them in the same order. A fourth he levelled so mathematically against me that I was hardly able to maintain my post, though I assumed the character and dignity of Ambassador from the Republic of Letters."

The old man was in rather a mordant humour that day, for he began railing against books.

"'My lord Devonshire,' he said, 'has more than ten thousand volumes in his house. I entreated his lordship to lodge me as far as possible from that pestilential corner. I have but one book, and that is *Euclid*, but I begin to be tired of him. I believe he has done more harm than good. He has set fools a reasoning.'

"'There is one thing in Mr. Hobbes' conduct,' said Lord Devonshire, 'that I am unable to account for: he is always railing at books, yet always adding to their number.'

"'I write, my lord,' answered Hobbes, 'to show the folly of writing. Were all the books in the world on board one vessel I should feel a greater pleasure than that Lucretius speaks of in seeing the wreck.'

"'But should you feel no tenderness for your own productions?'

"'I care for nothing,' added he, 'but *The Leviathan*, and that might possibly escape by swimming.'"

Like most philosophers who have growled at mankind and affected to play the misanthrope, Hobbes' practice by no means conformed with his theory. He could not bear to be left in an empty house. Wherever the Cavendishes went he begged to be taken also. A few days before he died, in December, 1679, his patron had arranged to move from Chatsworth across the moors to Hardwick. As Hobbes was clearly not fit to travel it was proposed to leave him behind, but he protested so

strongly that they took him with them lying on a feather-bed in a coach. When Hardwick was reached he was in a state of utter collapse and never rallied.

A vivid and interesting sketch of the philosopher and his principles will be found in Shorthouse's famous novel, *John Inglesant*, by those who desire to know more of him without wading knee-deep in the interminable morasses of his writings. Here we may quit the philosopher, but Derbyshire is very considerably in his debt, on the score of the poem, *De Mirabilibus Pecci*, or "Concerning the Wonders of the Peak," which he wrote during an early stay at Chatsworth. This may fairly be called the first little book of travel devoted to Derbyshire. It is a *jeu d'esprit*, in the shape of a poem in Latin hexameters, which would give little trouble to so accomplished a Latinist as Hobbes, and it afforded him a pleasant opportunity of paying a most graceful tribute to his patron and to the Cavendish family. The book seems to have enjoyed some success, though it did not run to many editions. In it Hobbes describes how he rode out from Chatsworth one morning, crossed the Derwent to Pilsley, and passing through Hassop struck over the moorland and hilly country towards Hope and Castleton, and reached Buxton the same evening. The next day he returned to Chatsworth by another route through Chelmorton, Sheldon, and Ashford, having easily seen the whole of the Seven Wonders.

Aedes, Mons, Barathrum, binus Fons, Antraque bina,

or, in plain English, a house, a mountain, a chasm, two fountains, and two caves. The house, of course, was Chatsworth—that is to say, Bess of Hardwick's Chatsworth—the mountain was Mam Tor, the chasm Elden Hole, the fountains St. Anne's Well at Buxton and the Ebbing Well at Barmoor Clough, and the caves were Poole's Cave near Buxton and the Peak Cavern at Castleton. Apparently there has been no edition of this curious little work since towards the close of the seventeenth century, when some anonymous person translated

Hobbes' poem into English verse without his knowledge and published the Latin and English side by side. We have already quoted some of the more interesting passages when dealing with the "Wonders" themselves.

Horace Walpole was at Chatsworth in 1760. It did not wholly please him. "I never," he writes, "was more disappointed than at Chatsworth, which, ever since I was born, I have condemned. It is a glorious situation, vast woods hang down the hills, which are green to the top, and the immense rocks only serve to dignify the prospect. The river runs before the door and serpentises more than you can conceive of." He did not approve the suggested plan of a "fine bridge with statues" —which is the bridge we know. If they must have a bridge, he said, let it be of "rude fragments, such as the giant of the Peak would step on that he might not be wet-shod." He thought the stables cumbrous, said "the principal front of the house was executed with the neatness of wrought plate," and was disappointed with the interior—save the chapel. "The heathen gods, goddesses, Christian virtues and allegoric gentlefolks are crowded into every room, as if Mrs. Holman had been in heaven and invited everyone she saw." He liked the great *jet d'eau*, but pooh-poohed the cascade —"that absurdity of a cascade," he calls it, truly enough, "which reduces the steps to be of no use at all." Nor did Hardwick better please this fastidious critic. "Never was I less charmed in my life," he wrote. "This house is not Gothic, but of that betweenity that intervened when Gothic declined and Palladian was creeping in—rather this is totally naked of either. It has vast chambers, aye, vast, such as the nobility of that time delighted in and did not know how to furnish. There is a fine bank of old oaks in the park over a lake; nothing else pleased me there."

Dr. Johnson visited Chatsworth on at least two occasions. Once was in the November of 1772, and, writing to Mrs. Thrale, he briefly described the Palace of the Peak as "a very

fine house." In his honour the fountain was played and the cascade opened, but Johnson was not very greatly impressed. "I am of my friend's opinion," he said, "that when one has seen the ocean, cascades are little things." Twelve years later he was at Chatsworth again. This time the Duke and Duchess were in residence. "Young Mr. Burke" was staying there as their guest, and he "led me," says Johnson in a letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "very commodiously into a conversation with the Duke and Duchess. We had a very good morning. The dinner was publick." Johnson was much pleased with the attention that was shown him, and says that he was honestly pressed to stay. That was at the beginning of September; on December 13th he died.

Garrick was another welcome visitor at Chatsworth in the time of the fourth Duke, who affected the society of actors and artistic people. "Remember to come by Derby and Matlock," wrote his Grace in 1762. "If you lie at Derby, you may, with great ease, be with me by dinner—it is all good road. Remember to come over Rowesley Bridge, so up my grounds, which shall be open." When Garrick arrived he found that old Quin, the gay *bon-vivant* veteran of the stage, was one of the party, and they had an excellent week, which Garrick epitomised as "all mirth, bagatelle, liberty, and a little drinking at times." Garrick found the Derbyshire squires of the neighbourhood very dull and heavy, and one morning he said to the Duke, "Please, your Grace, are the natives to be down on us to-day?" It was a *mal-à-propos* remark, for there happened to be in the room the Rev. Thomas Grove, Vicar of Bakewell, who had ridden over to pay his respects to the Duke. The parson rose in high dudgeon, left the house, and called no more. Some time later the Duke met him and asked why he did not call. "Well, well, my Lord Duke," was the reply, "I don't like coming while these mountebanks and playfolks are with you."

The Duke, who was so very polite to Johnson in 1784, was,

of course, the fifth Duke, also a William—in fact, the present Duke, the eighth, is the first in the line to bear any other name. His Duchess was the famous Georgiana, one of the greatest of the many great ladies of the eighteenth century. Everyone knows how she canvassed for her favourite Fox in the Westminster election of 1784, and gave kisses to the free and independent electors of Drury Lane in return for promises of votes. "If I were God Almighty," cried one of them, "I'd make thee Queen of Heaven." Everyone knows too the charm of her portrait by Reynolds, where she is dandling her infant son on her knees, and the romance attaching to the theft and recovery of her portrait by Gainsborough. But Gainsborough's despair, as he painted this picture, is not so well known. He was satisfied with all but the mouth. Again and again he painted it in, and then erased it, until he flung down his palette and brushes with the words, "Your Grace is too hard for me." We have no space here to give a sketch of her fascinating career, but room may be found for a few of the less familiar anecdotes connected with her name. One relates to Chatsworth itself. When, in 1790, an heir to the dukedom was born, the Duke gave the Duchess *carte blanche* to prepare Chatsworth for the christening ceremony. She sent to London for several artists, and under their direction gave orders for the conversion of one suite of rooms into "a complete panorama." But while the work was going on Countess Spencer, the mother of the Duchess, happened to visit her daughter, and, on her return to London, told her son-in-law of the enormous expense he was incurring in decorating Chatsworth in so fantastic a style. The story goes that the Duke immediately posted down to Derbyshire and discharged all the panoramic artists on the spot, much to the displeasure of the Duchess. The truth is that her Grace found Chatsworth rather dull. She moped there if she stayed long. "I do not know," wrote Horace Walpole in 1777, "that the Duchess of Devonshire has been positively ill. She thought

her nerves were much affected, but it proved to be only a disorder in her spirits, occasioned by her being tired of Chatsworth. She is much better since her removal."

The Duke and Duchess were not a very well-matched pair. General Fitzpatrick, one of the gossips of the day, used to say that the Duke's love for her grew quite cool a month after marriage, and that she had many sighing swains at her feet, among them being "poor Fred," the Prince of Wales, who chose to believe that she smiled on Lord Grey. But the scandal-mongers of the eighteenth century made free with ladies' reputations with or without the slightest provocation, and we need not pay them much attention. Wraxall, who knew everybody and kept a diary, said that "constitutional apathy formed the distinguishing characteristic" of the Duke, and the witty Mrs. Delany wrote in her most mischievous vein, "Had he fallen under the tuition of the late Lord Chesterfield, he might have possessed *les Graces*, but at present only that of the dukedom belongs to him." Another pair of very observant eyes watched him and the Duchess as they walked arm in arm in St. James's Park one Sunday morning in 1776, and what the eyes saw a very sprightly hand set down on paper. The Duke, according to Fanny Burney, was "ugly, tidy, and grave," and looked like "a very mean shopkeeper's journeyman." But what of the Duchess Georgiana? The account is so remarkable that we must quote Fanny's own words:—

"We saw the young and handsome Duchess of Devonshire walking in an undressed and slatternly manner. Two of her curls came quite unpinned and fell lank on one of her shoulders. One shoe was down at heel; the trimmings of her jacket and coat were in some places unsewn. Her cap was awry, and her cloak, which was rusty and powdered, was flung half off and half on. Had she not had a servant in a superb livery behind her she would certainly have been affronted. Every creature turned back to stare at her. Indeed, I think her very handsome, and she has a look of innocence and artlessness that made me quite sorry she should be so foolishly negligent of her person."

It is an extraordinary picture, so utterly unlike the imposing

Duchess which Gainsborough limned for the delight of posterity, that one finds it difficult to believe that it can have been Georgiana at all. But she was an eccentric in her way, and, moreover, no one contradicts Fanny Burney. In the following year the sprightly Lady Sarah Lennox, writing to Lady Susan O'Brien, speaks of "the pretty Duchess of Devonshire, who by all accounts has no fault but delicate health in my mind. She dines at 7, summer as well as winter, goes to bed at 3 and lies in bed till 4. She has hysteric fits in the morning and dances in the evening, she bathes, rides, dances for ten days and lies in bed the next ten. Indeed, I can't forgive her or rather her husband, the fault of ruining her health, though I think she may wear ten thousand figaries in her dress without the smallest blame."

But was she beautiful? Fanny Burney calls her "very handsome"; the fashionable critics of the day were inclined to deny it. Horace Walpole refused to worship: Wraxall declared that her hair was "not without a touch of red." Probably, the general verdict was that she was rather fascinating than beautiful, and her charm lay not so much in the regularity of her features as in the vivacity of her expression. The Duchess was also a bit of a poetess and a novelist, though her poem on *Mount Saint Gothard* and her novel, *The Sylph*, have long been forgotten. And to all these accomplishments she added that of being a gambler. She loved to play faro at Martindale's, and her Grace and Martindale used to agree that whatever they won from each other should be double or even treble the sum that it was called. Sheridan told his friends that he had frequently handed the Duchess to her coach when she was literally sobbing at her losses, she, perhaps, having lost £1,500 when it was only supposed to be £500.

One of the quaintest stories about her is to be found in Lady Charlotte Campbell's *Diary*. The Duchess for some reason or other wished to change her town house. She looked at several but none pleased her. Then she suddenly thought

that Lord Fife's would suit. So on the spur of the moment she drove round to see him. The servants said "not at home," but she entered in spite of them—no flunkey dared stop the Duchess Georgiana—and found his lordship at late breakfast. She began as follows:—"My lord, you were in love with me twenty-five years ago, and now I am come to ask a favour of you." "Ma'am," was the cool reply, "I admit the fact, but as I cannot boast of any favour your Grace bestowed on me, I don't see what claim you derive from that circumstance." Nevertheless, five minutes afterwards, the Duchess carried her point and Lord Fife turned out within the week. The Duchess' popularity was extraordinary; even Pigott, the author of *The Female Jockey Club*—a highly libellous collection of character-sketches of the leading ladies of English society—had no fault to find in her. "In a word," he says, "were the constitution of society in this country to have been reformed by the example of one individual, this lovely woman was born to accomplish it." When she died in 1806, the Prince of Wales said to Fox, "We have lost the best bred woman in England." Fox's reply was superb. "We have lost," he said, "the kindest heart." The Duke, according to Lady Charlotte Campbell, "cried bitterly and incessantly for a week before her death," and the diarist added, "Poor thing, with all her faults she was very ardently loved by her friends, who severely felt her loss."

Three years later, in 1809, the widowed Duke married Lady Elizabeth Foster, who had been the intimate friend and inseparable companion of the Duchess Georgiana. It was a curious friendship, much commented on by the gossips of the day, for Lady Elizabeth's reputation—she was a daughter of Lord Hervey, Bishop of Bristol, and had been married when very young to a disreputable Irish M.P.—was far from good. It was, indeed, openly stated that she was the mistress of the Duke of Devonshire himself, and there were extraordinary rumours afloat to the effect that the Duchess Georgiana's infant

son was not her child at all but the child of the Duke and Lady Elizabeth Foster. All the more remarkable, therefore, that the two ladies should maintain their friendship unbroken to the end. Lady Elizabeth was a most beautiful woman with classical features; she had also great mental accomplishments and exquisite artistic taste. When the Duke died in 1811 the Duchess went to live in Rome, where she held a court of her own, was the patroness of the sculptors Thorwaldsen and Canova, published a magnificent folio edition of the *Aeneid*, and had the old Cardinal de Bernis in constant attendance. But she lived to become a hollow ruin and a painted mask, and died unlamented in 1824. This was the Lady Elizabeth to whom Gibbon, the historian, once made a grotesque avowal of love. He had been reading to her, one summer morning, the concluding chapters of his *Decline and Fall*, in a clematis-covered arbour, and when she expressed her admiration at the close, he slid down before her on his knees, clasped her hands and declared his passion. The lady was so surprised and then so diverted at the spectacle of the fat historian of *The Decline and Fall* on his knees, that she went off into peals of laughter. Gibbon tried to rise, but failed. His huge bulk was too unwieldy, and in the end her ladyship had to ring for a footman to come to his assistance. Mr. Gibbon, she said, had slipped from his chair.

The sixth Duke William, who never married, died in 1858. He has many titles to remembrance—his love of building, his love of books, his love of magnificence. It was he who in 1815 invited Tom Moore to spend a week at Chatsworth. Moore was naturally very much pleased at the invitation but was rather doubtful about accepting it. "I do not think I shall go," he wrote to his friend Rogers. "I have no servant to take with me, and my hat is shabby, and the seams of my best coat are beginning to look white and—in short, if a man cannot step on equal ground with these people he had much better keep out of their way. I can meet them on pretty fair

terms at a dinner or ball, but a whole week in the same house with them detects the poverty of a man's ammunition deplorably . . . . At the same time I think the Duke one of the civillest persons in the whole peerage." However, it is clear that Moore really wanted to go, and so he sent off post haste to his London tailor an order for a new coat. One can imagine the wrath that shook his little cottage when the coat came and did not fit. "I have been obliged," he writes to his mother, "to have an Ashbourne bungler at me"; that is to say, the local tailor. Arrived at Chatsworth, he found there the Morpeths—the Duke's eldest sister, Georgiana, had married Lord Morpeth—the Boringdons, the Jerseys, the Harrowbys, and a host of other lords and ladies, himself being almost the only "common rascal" among them. He enjoyed himself exceedingly, "snatched a moment from the whirl of lords and ladies to write a scrambling line to his mother," and says, "I could have wished Bessy were here, but that I know that she would not have been comfortable." Bessy, perhaps, was better at Mayfield.

Eleven years later, in 1829, Charles Greville, the diarist, described a Chatsworth house-party, of which he formed one, when forty guests sate down to dinner every day and about a hundred and fifty servants in the steward's room and the servants' hall. There were the Lievens, the Cowpers, the Granvilles, the Wharncliffes, the Granthams, the Wiltons, the Stanleys, the Belfasts, the Newboroughs, the Dawsons, the Clanwilliams, the Ansons, and others. "Nothing," says Greville, himself a distant connection of the Duke, "could be more agreeable from the gaiety of numbers and the entire liberty which prevails. All the resources of the house, horses, carriages, keepers, etc., are placed at the disposal of the guests and everybody does what they like best. In the evening they acted charades or danced, and there was plenty of *écarté* and whist, high and low." One of the charades of this particular house-party was a good deal talked about. News had come

of the opening of peace negotiations between Russia and Turkey, then at war, and to celebrate the event—which resulted in the Peace of Adrianople—the word Constantinople was chosen to be acted as a charade. A tableau representing Penelope and her suitors stood for "Constant," a tavern scene for "inn," and a scene from *Anne of Geierstein* for "opal." The final tableau represented a Russian victory over the Turks, with Lord Morpeth as Diebitsch laying a cross of laurels at the foot of the fascinating Madame de Lieven.

Greville was again at Chatsworth in 1843, after the Duke had added the new wing to the house. The diarist was not altogether satisfied with the transformation which had taken place. "Chatsworth," he writes, "is very magnificent, but I look back with regret to the house in its unfinished state, when we lived in three spacious, cheerful rooms looking to the south, which are now quite useless, being gorgeously furnished with velvet and silk and marble tables, but unoccupied, and the windows closed lest the sun should spoil the finery with which the apartments are decorated. The comfort we had there has been ill exchanged for the magnificence which has replaced it, and the Duke has made the house so large that he cannot afford to live in it, and never remains there for more than two or three months in the year." The rebuilding of Chatsworth was not the only example of the sixth Duke's magnificence, for when he was the special envoy of the King of England at the coronation of the Tsar Nicholas I. at Moscow, his gorgeous entertainments were the talk of Europe. It was this Duke, too, who bought for Chatsworth most of the literary treasures, which its library now possesses, and much of the sculpture which adorns its galleries. Of the guests who, during the last fifty years, have enjoyed the far-famed Cavendish hospitality we will not speak. There must be many an amusing and interesting anecdote awaiting publication in memoirs and diaries which have not yet seen the light. Probably no visitors' book in any country house in Europe

contains a list of names so varied and distinguished as that at Chatsworth.

Chatsworth figures in what, by general consent of the best critics, is the masterpiece of one of the best of English authoresses. It is the Pemberley of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The novel was written in 1796-97, but the description is close and the identification is still easy. The heroine, the charming Elizabeth Bennett, was taken by her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner, on a tour in Derbyshire. They saw Matlock and Dovedale – unfortunately no detail is given—and then, while on their way to Lambton, Mrs. Gardiner expressed a desire to revisit Pemberley, which is described as being about two miles off the direct route. Lambton is obviously Bakewell—indeed, in one place the novelist makes what looks like a slip, and lets out the real name. The party entered Chatsworth from the Beeley side. There is mention of the sudden turn in the road near Edensor, the drop down to the bridge, the high woods behind the house and the stables at the rear, the river, partly natural, partly artificial, and the ten miles circuit of the park. Another touch of local colour is Mr. Darcy's invitation to Mr. Gardiner to fish in his waters. How Elizabeth was shown over the house —trembling, as Miss Austen's heroines always tremble, lest she should meet the owner—and was suddenly confronted by Darcy, who was not expected till the morrow, how she went for a walk with her uncle and aunt in the woods, and then saw Darcy following, and how she was happy and timorous at the same time, and all in the prettiest way—these things readers must find out for themselves in *Pride and Prejudice*. If they have read and forgotten, let them read it again. Disraeli owned to having read it from cover to cover no fewer than seventeen times!

Baslow Bridge.

CHAPTER XXI

BASLOW: LONGSTONE AND HASSOP

On the border of Chatsworth Park stands Baslow, a pretty village of some importance. Despite its distance from the railway, it is one of the best touring centres for this side of the county, for it lies within easy walking distance of Rowsley, Bakewell, Ashford, Eyam, Grindleford Bridge, Hathersage, and the noble moors, whose fine edges overhang the Derwent Valley from Baslow to the Vale of Hope. Moreover, its situation is delightful on a pretty reach of the Derwent and the lower slopes of the hill which mounts up to the moor, while the whole demesne of Chatsworth is its immediate neighbour. The village is curiously divided in twain. At the Bridge End the Derwent is spanned by a humped bridge, still steep and placed at an awkward angle to the road, yet much steeper in the old days, as one can see from the curious stone toll shelter on the left bank, the floor

of which is evidently higher than it used to be. The church stands by the side of the stony bed of the river, here pleasantly overhung with trees, a typical Derbyshire church, with not ungraceful spire. It was restored some half century ago by ruthless hands, which swept away nearly everything that was old, save a few ancient sepulchral stones and a heavy whip, which the dog-whipper plied on stray curs if they ventured within the precincts. Near the church is the principal part of the village; many of the houses still preserve their picturesque thatch, and the little place wears an air of prosperity. The other half of the village lies on the Bar Brook, near the entrance gates to Chatsworth, with one or two picturesque old inns and a variety of other hostelries, which are the goal of the Sheffield and Chesterfield brakes that daily cross the moors to Baslow in the summer time. They did the same fifty years ago, as a Sheffield poet, Mr. John Hall, bore witness in tolerable rhyme:—

"Here, when the bees begin to hum
And orchards are all white with bloom,
And blackbirds, piping through the air,
The genial time of Spring declare;
Reminded then of thy dear charms
The town lets loose its busy swarms,
Who long confined in noisome smoke
Through dreary Winter's tedious yoke,
Like captive birds escaped, take wing
To sound the first glad notes of Spring.
A motley group, of every age,
From laughing youth to manhood sage,
Merchants, mechanics, men of trade,
Professionals of every grade,
With clerks and shopmen, and their chosen
Wives and sweethearts by the dozen,
In open britska, shay or drag,
Or hired gig with doubtful nag,
From Owler's heathered heights they come,
To thy sweet vale, Elysium!
And through a lengthened Summer's day
Here pass their joyful holiday."

And Elysium is hardly too big a word to apply to the green valley in which Baslow lies so prettily, if you have come over the wild bleak moors either from Sheffield or Chesterfield.

From Baslow it is a pleasant afternoon's ramble to visit the familiar landmark of Longstone Edge, which stretches across from the Wye, near Cressbrook Dale, to the Derwent at Calver, some five miles in length and rising to nearly thirteen hundred feet at its highest point. It has no outstanding feature, no masses of picturesque stone on the skyline; Longstone Edge is set simply, yet with imposing dignity, as the northern boundary of the valley which is at its broadest towards Ashford, and narrows towards Longstone and Hassop. We cross the Derwent at Baslow Bridge and turn to the right along the road that leads past the weir. In a few hundred yards we come to Bubnell Grange, an old twin-gabled house of the ordinary Derbyshire pattern, and then, on the left hand, reach a retired clough or coomb, more like a fold in the Sussex Downs, which bears the name of Bramwell Dale from the farm house lying ahead of us. The further slope and crest of its neat pastures are covered with a delightful wood, that fits like a saddle to its side. Through this wood runs a lane, over which the trees interlace their branches and afford cool shade even in the hottest of summer suns, ere it emerges into another narrow valley, with Calver a short mile away on the right, and Froggatt Edge high above it on the other side of Derwent. Across this valley rises Longstone Edge, and the old road from Bakewell to Sheffield, through Hassop, Calver, and Grindleford Bridge, runs at its foot, lined on either side by trees which form an exquisite avenue. I could find no one who knew when or by whom these trees were planted. Yet the man who had the thought and the will to set such gracious trees to transform a bare road into a thing of beauty deserves the kindliest remembrance. Nowadays trees are rarely planted —they are not utilitarian; they have a trick of throwing down the stone walls with their roots. But the difference!

Let us cross the road to a gate opposite and mount upwards along a rough cart track, first by the side of a plantation, then out in the open again, keeping throughout by the wall side. Soon we begin to get a noble view, which gives us the valleys of Wye and Derwent together, and enables us to combine in the same fair landscape both Bakewell and Chatsworth, the top of whose great conservatory glows and glances like a mirror. Yonder is the spire of Edensor and the village of Pilsley, which looks so important and obvious as soon as one gets up among the hills, but hides itself so effectively when one is down in the plain. On the right we have Bakewell and its spire, and below us the dark green woods of Hassop. Our way lies towards the clump of trees on the summit, but before we reach it we turn through a gate on the left hand along a wider track. One of the stone posts of this gate is an old road stone. Tidswall Road is the legend on one side, with the date 1737 below it; and on the other three sides are to be read Sheffield Road, Chesterfield Road, and Ashbourne Road. It has suffered much ill-usage. The iron catch for the gate has been driven ruthlessly into it; it has been roughly gashed on the top, and alien letters have been deeply incised—capital letters designed to serve as parish boundary marks. It is a pity, for these stones can never be replaced. What would not antiquaries give for a complete set of milestones from one of the Roman roads? As it is, only one or two survive in fragments. But on many English high roads even the milestones of the coaching days have vanished in recent years, for no reason save that of wanton destruction. If the authorities must put up their iron monstrosities, they might at least leave the ancient stones to the slow processes of senile decay. This stone is not *in situ*, for there never was a main road over this hillside, and the mention of distant Ashbourne is also curious, unless it be due to the fact that in 1737 all civil cases relating to this part of Derbyshire were tried at Tutbury, and Ashbourne stood as a sort of synonym for London and the south. Possibly it originally stood at the cross roads at Calver or

Barbrook Mill, and the Ashbourne direction was taken to include the direction to Bakewell.

Below the clump of trees, where the path begins to dip, turn up the hillside again by a cart track, leading past a disused limekiln, towards Bleaklow Farm—the only human habitation on the edge. At the back of the farm a track winds among the unsightly heaps of tailings from the disused lead mines which cover the entire face of this rising ground. Here I fell in with an old man, busy repairing a stone wall, who told me that he was one of the last survivors of the lead miners in the district. Eighteen shillings a week, he said, had been the most he had ever earned in a lead mine—three shillings a day was the regular wage, and the men worked in shifts of eight hours each. That was at the Lady Wash mine above Eyam, where expensive machinery had been put down, and this was among the last to relinquish the struggle against the influx of cheap Spanish ore. The chimney towards which he pointed across the valley is still a prominent landmark for miles around. He considered eighteen shillings a week a good wage, though he had earned as much as forty-five in a colliery, and he regretted the extinction of Derbyshire's staple industry. For extinct it practically is, except for the one great mine in Darley Dale and very few others, and no man now brings up his son to be a lead-miner. As for the limestone tailings which litter the ground, it only remains for them to be carted away and shipped to America and elsewhere, to be used in the processes of the mysterious manufacture which is keeping so many horses and carts and even motor wagons busy on the roads to the Derbyshire railway stations with their loads of what once was useless waste.

As you thread your way through the mounds look out for a little cairn of stones—in a field on your right hand—which marks the highest point hereabouts. The view it affords is totally different from that which we have had towards the south. Here we look over an undulating plateau, covered with

heather and gorse but quite without trees and shade, save the woods above Eyam, and one or two little oases of dark green which mark the hamlets of Foolow and Wardlow. We look, indeed, straight across Middleton Dale to Eyam Edge and Hucklow Edge. The whitewashed house standing almost solitary midway along the ridge is the tiny alehouse at Bretton. Tideswell we cannot see, it is hidden in its hollow to the left; but on the right the church tower of Eyam is visible and the deep cleft of Stony Middleton. It is a thoroughly Derbyshire prospect, which makes us appreciate the more the softer scene which discloses itself as we resume our way and find the edge dipping before us, when again we face towards the south. Here we command the Longstone valley, with Great Longstone in the centre and Little Longstone and Headstones Head a mile to the right. Just beyond Headstones Head, where we can see the cleft which we know to mark the course of the Wye, Fin Cop rises out of the plain, more like a promontory of the sea than an inland hill. For it ascends field by field in the regular smooth ascent of an inclined plane and then suddenly breaks short in curving outline at the edge. Monsal Dale lies below that graceful bend.

We join a road which has come over the moor from Wardlow and Foolow. For half-a-mile this runs along the side of the edge, gently dropping all the way, and giving us the continued pleasure of a noble view. Then it suddenly turns at right angles and tumbles headlong down to Great Longstone.

This is a straggling place, of no particular distinction, whose chief attraction is a row of magnificent elms reaching from the corner of the village green to the gates of Longstone Hall, where they join a short avenue of approach to the fine red-brick house, covered with ivy and creepers. The Hall, which is about a century and a half old, was built to take the place of an older house which, save that it was rather larger, was a replica of Eyam Hall. Indeed, both houses belonged to the Wrights of Longstone, one of the oldest of Derbyshire

families, who, as the Court Rolls of the Manor of Ashford testify, were resident in the district as far back as the tenth century, and were probably the parent stock of the many well-known branches of the Wrights which have obtained distinction in the Midland counties. They have their memorials in the church close by, and if other tablets show that Longstone Hall was associated for a time with alien names, that is because for half a century the Wrights migrated to Devonshire and the Hall was let. They returned in 1870 to their ancient hearth.

Longstone Church, which lies close to the Hall, was restored thirty years ago with a praiseworthy determination to retain all that was worth retention. So the old oak beams of the roof in the nave and aisles have been suffered to remain as they were, and have not been improved away. In the nave is a tablet to the memory of Dr. Edward Buxton, who died in 1822 at the age of seventy-five. He had been in practice in Bakewell but had retired to Longstone. Then in 1820 "a long, epidemical contagion" broke out. The old Doctor did not sit at home with folded hands. He girded on his harness once more, and put himself and his talents at the service of the suffering, without asking a fee. Let me quote from the tablet. "His professional abilities, ever ready to assist the poor and the needy, showed particularly conspicuous during a long epidemical contagion which in the year 1820 afflicted this village, when his gratuitously administering relief to soothe and subdue the existing woe strongly testified his goodness of heart." The contagion in question was typhus fever, which visited every house in Great Longstone except the bootmaker's next to the present Post Office. Not a single person died in the village itself, though there were two deaths up at Bleaklow Farm on the edge, where one would have thought the air too pure for the typhus germs to exist. Dr. Buxton's remedy was a curious one, for he prescribed not physic but "wort"—that is to say, new beer before the processes of fermentation are complete— and to

obtain this in sufficient quantities beer was brewed every day at the Church Lane Farm, then occupied by a Mr. Gregory. In 1904 there was still living in Great Longstone a nonagenarian survivor of the "epidemical contagion" of 1820, active and well enough to live by herself and tend to her own wants.

At the east end of the south aisle is a black oak parclose containing several memorials bearing the names of the Eyres of Hassop. The best is a fine brass, dated 1624, showing Rowland Eyre and Gartrelle, his wife, kneeling in prayer at two separate desks. The parclose has two doors with wooden locks, and the carving shows the familiar leg and spur of the Eyre crest. According to the story, an ancestor of the Eyres fought by the side of William the Conqueror at Hastings and opened the visor of the Norman's helmet at an opportune moment, when he was gasping for breath. The Duke asked him his name and was told that it was "Truelove," to which he made reply, "True love thou hast shown me, but henceforth thy name shall be Eyre, for thou has given me air." Later in the day on inquiring for his new friend he found that he had lost a leg, and promptly gave him the missing limb for his crest with the promise of many manors. It sounds a more than usually silly story, but it seems to possess the sanction of great antiquity.

The Eyres, whose memorials adorn Longstone Church, dwelt at the neighbouring hall of Hassop, set in a charming park along the road from Longstone to Baslow. This Hassop estate belonged originally to the Foljambes—whom we met at Tideswell—was then carried by marriage into the Plumpton family, and sold in 1498 to Catherine, widow of Stephen Eyre of Hassop, a younger son of the Eyres of Padley. It remained in the possession of the Eyres down to the death of the Countess of Newburgh—a Countess *suo jure*—in 1853. Much romance and mystery attach to the Earldom of Newburgh, and much litigation has arisen out of the Hassop estate. It would require a volume to tell the story in full; here we will be content with a few of the salient points. The actual connection between

Hassop and the Earldom of Newburgh did not begin until 1814, when Mr. Francis Eyre of Hassop assumed the title as the sixth Earl of Newburgh, through his mother, Lady Mary Radclyffe. She was the younger daughter of the third Countess (*suo jure*) who had married *en secondes noces* Charles Radclyffe, second son of an Earl of Derwentwater. Ardent Jacobites, both father and son fought at the battle of Preston in 1715 and were taken prisoners. The father was executed, the son managed to escape to the Continent, where in 1731, on the death of his nephew, he assumed the title, though it had been declared attainted. In 1745 he was caught in a ship off Dover while bound for Scotland—evidently to join Prince Charlie—and was executed in the Tower in 1746 on the death sentence which had been passed upon him in absence thirty years before. His son, the fourth Earl, saw all his estates confiscated in favour of Greenwich Hospital and the fifth Earl died without heir in 1814.

The Earldom of Newburgh reverted, therefore, to the descendants of Lady Ann Clifford, daughter of the third Countess by her first marriage. She was indisputably represented by an Italian, Prince Giustiniani, who, being an alien, could not assume the title. Consequently, it was taken for granted that the succession devolved upon the representatives of the daughter of the third Countess by her second marriage, that is to say, upon the own sister of the fourth Earl. This was Lady Mary Radclyffe, who had married Francis Eyre of Hassop, and their son succeeded to the title and estates, without challenge. He styled himself the sixth Earl and was succeeded by his son, the seventh Earl, who died *s.p.* in 1833. The eighth Earl, his younger brother, succeeded and died unmarried in 1852, and his sister then became Countess in her own right. She had married, in 1836, Colonel Charles Leslie, and died childless in 1853. This Colonel Leslie was an old Peninsular veteran, who carried to his grave a bullet in the leg which he got at the Battle of Albuera, and inherited under his wife's will the whole of the Hassop estates, which

are still in the possession of his family. To the earldom, of course, he had no claim whatever. The will was made by the Countess when she was on her deathbed, when, in fact, she was almost moribund. A mounted messenger had been sent off in hot haste in the early hours of the morning to fetch the doctor from Baslow, and the Countess was sinking when he arrived. When they told him that a solicitor was on the way down from London to make the will, he warned them that, if they waited, the Countess would probably be dead before he came. So the will was hurriedly drawn up—leaving the estate to her husband, with special remainder to her stepson and his second son—and the dying Countess had but just sufficient strength to sign. It was a very close thing for Colonel Leslie!

The principal claimant to the Earldom of Newburgh was a Mr. Cadman, of Sheffield, who declared that he was descended from the Hon. Charlotte Radclyffe and a certain George Goodwin, whom she married at Hope in 1747. But the registers at Hope have been mutilated, and the pages containing the entries between September 1745 and August 1748 are missing. These registers, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were in the custody of a parish clerk, who kept a public house, and was always ready to produce them for the inspection of any inquisitive stranger. It is practically certain that the registers were not tampered with until the line of the Newburghs looked like failing, and it is more than a curious coincidence that there are mutilations in the registers at Longstone, Hathersage, Eastwell, Banbury, Wirksworth, and Lichfield covering the years in which it is known that there were entries relating to the Eyres! Consequently, strong suspicions were current in Derbyshire half a century ago that someone had not been playing the game.

A second claimant—this time to the Hassop estates, not to the earldom—was Mr. Gladwin Cloves Cave, who, in the early 'eighties, came over from Australia and flustered quiet little Hassop by taking forcible possession of the Hall. He claimed

that the will made by Dorothy Leslie, *née* Eyre, in 1853 was invalid, because her brother, the eighth Earl of Newburgh whom she had succeeded, had settled the estates in favour of his mother's sisters, *nées* Gladwin, from whom Mr. Cave was descended. But this deed of settlement was never forthcoming, and judgment in the Courts went against the claimant, who was by special injunction restrained from further trespass on the Hassop estates. It has also been held that the assumption of the Earldom of Newburgh by Thomas Eyre and Francis Eyre between 1827 and 1852 was entirely without warrant. In 1857 Maria Bandini Giustiniani was naturalised in Great Britain, and her claim to be Countess of Newburgh was allowed in 1858. At her death in 1877 she was succeeded by her son as eighth Earl, who was created Prince Giustiniani by Pio Nono.

We have spoken of the unfortunate Earls of Derwentwater who suffered in the Stuart cause; part of the red baize from the scaffold of the second Earl is still preserved at Hassop Hall, and faded crimson stains tell of the purpose which it served. Not only the Radclyffes but also the Eyres were staunch for the Stuarts. The latter were up to the eyes in the rebellion of the '45, and a century before in the Civil War Hassop Hall had been garrisoned for the King. Its owner, Colonel Thomas Eyre, raised a troop in 1642, fought in hand-to hand encounter with Cromwell at Edgehill, distinguished himself at Welbeck and the siege of Newark, and, after Naseby, was taken prisoner near Derby and thrown into Derby gaol, where he died in 1645 of wounds and neglect.

Moorseats, Hathersage.

CHAPTER XXII

ROGGATT EDGE, SURPRISE VIEW, AND HATHERSAGE

The path to the moor at Baslow lies straight up the hill from the church, past the grounds of the Grand Hotel and the houses beyond. But much the pleasanter way is to turn in at the back of the hotel and, in a few yards, climb to the top path of the Yeld wood, which lines the slope above the Sheffield road. It rises gently and, on running out into the open, bears leftwards into the narrow sandy road, which ascends more steeply past the quarry and soon reaches the level plateau of the moor. A little to the right is the Wellington Monument, a shaft of cut stones some ten feet high and placed on the top of a big boulder. This was set up in 1866 as a balance to the Nelson monument on the opposite height, and also as a record of the Iron Duke's visit to the moor when the guest of the Duke of Rutland. This point commands a lovely view down the valley of the Derwent over Chatsworth Park. Edensor is hidden, but its spire is visible among the trees, and the whole valley looks, and indeed is, one delightful pleasaunce. Far away in the distance one can see the white smoke from the trains at

Rowsley below the Stanton Woods, which block the end of the valley, and midway we get the curving dips of the hills on either side which project down into the vale, and seem wishful to cleave it in twain on the further confines of Chatsworth Park. The high wooded ground at the back of Chatsworth is dwarfed by the overhanging moors. Up the valley at our feet runs the Sheffield road, dominated on the opposite side by Gardom's Edge. This looks tolerably smooth in most lights, but towards evening the black rocks disclose their rugged outline. The road flows on like a white dusty riband, and the long strings of Sheffield waggonettes and brakes crawl slowly up it when night falls and the blare of the horn and the song of the holiday-maker float up to the moor. We can watch them climb the toilsome ascent till the road winds out of sight on the left, curving round towards the keeper's lonely cottage, which stands as gaunt sentinel on the sky-line.

It is a pleasant walk along the turfy drive—the moor belongs to the Duke of Rutland and is carefully preserved—to where it issues in a by-lane, a hundred yards or so from the main road. This by-lane was once the principal line of traffic between Chesterfield and Manchester, through Grindleford and Chapel. You can see it cross the Sheffield road and strike over the lower spur of the rising ground, no broader than the wide green tracts at its sides, as it runs to join the Chesterfield road at a lone farm named Bleak House. Returning to the Wellington Monument and then bearing to the right, we pass in a hundred yards a solitary monolith rising from the heather. This is the Eagle Stone, or, more properly, the Aigle Stone, so called, it is conjectured, from the Saxon deity who could throw stones which mere men could not move. A similar stone at Studland, near Bournemouth, is called the Agle Stone, and Anvil Stone and Andle Stone are other variants of what is evidently the same name. Thence the path goes forward—too far from the edge to afford any view on the left side—until it reaches a cleft in the rocks. Here the rough, narrow road, of which we spoke above,

reappears and drops down to Curbar and the Derwent Valley, and here too an entirely new prospect greets us. Chatsworth is shut out, but in its stead we see a gently rising upland across the Derwent with the village of Calver at the foot of the slope, and to the right the limestone gorge of Stony Middleton. Still higher on the right are the roofs of Eyam and above these again are Eyam Edge and Eyam Moor. Below us is Curbar, a grey little village with a stranded look, while the Derwent twists at right angles from its general course under the stone bridge by the weir. But pleasant as is this view it is not to be compared with the one that is obtained by crossing the road and following along the next edge to a tumbled cairn of stones. Just beyond, a group of huge rocks, flat-topped and chasm-divided, faces perpendicularly down to the valley. One of the largest of these has depressions in its surface, of varying depth, but all curiously rounded. These I found full of water from the rain of the day before and, as the wind came racing over the valley, it agitated these tiny pools till the water lapped and fretted like a fairy sea. There is always a breeze on Curbar Edge, and if any wind at all be stirring it will smite your face here with furious buffeting till the view quivers before your eyes like a picture in a biograph. Here we regain Chatsworth Park and the whole lovely vista down to Rowsley, while on the right the Derwent valley has opened out and we begin to see up stream to Grindleford and catch glimpses of the peaks and ridges above and beyond Hathersage. Nothing mars the delights of the scene. Even the mills of Calver and the ruined mining chimneys blend into the picture, and the smoke from the kilns of Stony Middleton turns into blue, mysterious haze.

Curbar Edge suggested to Mr. William Watson one of his finest sonnets, *Night on Curbar Edge* :—

> " No echo of man's life pursues my ears ;
> Nothing disputes this desolation's reign ;
> Change comes not, this dread temple to profane,
> Where time by æons reckons, not by years.

Its patient form one crag, sole stranded, rears,
Type of whate'er is destined to remain,
While yon still host encamped on night's waste plain
Keeps armèd watch, a million quivering spears.
" Hushed are the wild and wing'd lives of the moor,
The sleeping sheep nestle 'neath ruined wall
Or unhewn stones in random concourse hurled ;
Solitude, sleepless, listens at Fate's door ;
And there is built and 'stablisht over all
Tremendous silence, older than the world. "

The reference to the "sole stranded crag" is evidently to the Eagle Stone on Baslow Edge, but the name Curbar Edge is often applied to the whole edge from above Froggatt to the Wellington Monument.

As we resume our way, the path begins to drop, but with very gradual descent, and, loth to quit the edge, affords a continual succession of delightful views. Then it bends gently towards the right, and as the valley narrows we see the Chatsworth demesne no more, while Stony Middleton and Eyam are blotted out of sight by the Stokemoor Wood, facing Stoke Hall. High above is the chimney of the New Engines Mine, on the fringe of Eyam Moor, looking from here more like some pillar or obelisk, and the road from Eyam to Grindleford comes slanting down the hill, after making its sharp turn at right angles a mile and a half out of Eyam. Below are Grindleford Bridge, one of the best known of Derwent's many bridges, and the station of the Dore and Chinley line.

Our path leads us out into a second Sheffield road which has come up the Derwent valley under the edges, and we follow it up the hill to the right for a brisk half-hour's walk, around the head of the inlet valley, where stands Longshawe, a "shooting box"—so dukes call their smaller country seats—of the Duke of Rutland. Above it is the Fox House Inn, a famous roadside house with oriel windows, situated at the junction where the road splits rectangularly. But it is a long climb up to the Fox House, with little reward in the way of scenery save the backward view across to Eyam Moor, where the by-lane

from Hucklow Edge and Eyam Edge over Sir William Hill drops down as sheer as a plummet. "Pleasuring parties" from Sheffield throng this road in summer, else it has lost most of its traffic. The new railway destroyed the carrying trade, on which, until ten years ago, Eyam and the Vale of Hope depended for supplies. It has driven to their final haven the old carrier carts and 'buses which jogged regularly into Sheffield so many times a week. As I walked up the hill I fell into conversation with a man carting stone from Eyam to the Toad's Mouth who had driven one of these 'buses for twenty-two years. Nor did he seem greatly to mind that the railway had robbed him of his occupation. It had cheapened, he said, the price of coals; he still had a horse and cart to drive, and I dare say the pace of his old 'bus was not much more than that of his stone cart as it creaked and grumbled up the steep ascent.

From the Fox House let us take the road to Hathersage, passing in a few yards on the left the main road leading down to Grindleford Bridge. In a short half-mile we reach Burbage Bridge, a solidly banked-up structure at a turn of the road thrown across a pretty little mountain stream flowing down from the moor. Twenty yards beyond is the Toad's Mouth, a curiously-shaped rock piled up on another big boulder, not unlike the gaping mouth of a squatting toad. An eye has been added by some sportive artist to emphasise the likeness. The wild expanses of the Burbage and Hathersage Moors on the right hand rise to the edge of Higgar Tor, over fourteen hundred feet above sea level, whose massive and fantastic boulders show grandly against the sky line. Between Higgar Tor and the road are the remains of an ancient British fortified place, several acres in extent, known as the Caerl Wark. The name explains itself—given by a later generation to the handiwork of men of an earlier race. We have seen it in the place-name Calton, which is really Caerlton, on the high ground above Edensor, and not far from where we now are is a large rock, fashioned like a chair with a step for the feet,

which bears the name of Cair's Chair. Higgar Tor itself - so we are told by those who are wise in such recondite and doubtful matters—means the Hill of God. The Caerl Wark is unquestionably one of the most important prehistoric camps in England, and the general plan of the work can easily be traced. For at the summit of the little hill is a rocky platform, some six hundred feet long, presenting on three sides an almost vertical scarp, roughly filled in with masonry. An earthen rampart, faced with big unhewn stones, was built across the neck of land connecting the platform with the rising ground in the west, and the fortress was as complete as the hands of its builders could make it.

From Burbage Bridge the road turns sharply to the south-west and runs in a direct line to Surprise View, with barren wastes on either hand, save for the woods about Longshawe, whose handsome front comes well into view. Ten thousand acres of moorland are attached to Longshawe, one of the best sporting estates in the country, on which the sixth Duke of Rutland—the fox-hunting Duke—lavished large sums of money and laid out twenty miles of drives. The road rises a little, passing midway upon the left a sunken track leading across to the Grindleford road. Then we reach the famous Millstone Edge Nick, known far and wide as the Surprise View, where the road turns at right angles to the right and leads down into Hathersage. As we mount to the top of the rock through which the road has been cut the whole delightful scene is spread before us. We are standing on the extremity of Millstone Edge, a flanking outpost, as it were, of Stanage Edge, running high up across the Hathersage Moor to High Neb and Moscar. At a lower level the open ground above Hathersage proper carries the eye along towards Bamford Edge and Lady Bower, and the distant heights of Derwent Edge. We cannot see into Derwent Dale, but Crook Hill, in the fork of the Ashop and the Derwent, is plain before us, and the ever-present Win Hill. From Win Hill to Lose Hill, from Lose Hill to Mam Tor at the back of Castleton, and

then round to the lesser heights of Eyam Moor and the near side of Longstone Edge above Calver, such is the glorious prospect! Yet with most, I fancy, the special charm of Surprise View lies not so much in the hills as in the valleys. On the left is the valley of the Derwent, where it flows down to Grindleford, richly wooded on either side and crowned with moorland heather on the opposite crest by Hazelford and Leam Hall. To the right stretches the whole length of the green Vale of Hope. Hathersage is at our feet, and at the far extremity the cincture of hills encircling Castleton and the red scarred side of Mam Tor. Nearly opposite is the lovely wooded recess which leads to Highlow, Abney, Bretton, and the Offerton woods. Beyond—on our side this time—is the Bamford reach of the Derwent; beyond that again is the gap where the railway quits the vale to escape the Castleton Hills only to be confronted with those of Edale, and—just opposite where the line begins to turn—the gap of Bradwell Dale. Gazing on the lovely scene one wonders the more why the cottage a few yards below us is roofless, why its walls have been suffered to fall in, why the grass is growing on the hearth-stone. What a site for a dwelling! Even the bitter winds of winter would be worth enduring for the sake of opening one's eyes every morning upon such a perfect combination of valley, moor, and wood. Perfect in all but one detail! A quarry lies to our left, the huge quarry of the Derwent Water Board, connected with the railway by cuttings and embankments and a fearsome inclined plane.

A pleasantly curving and swift descending road soon carries us into Hathersage. Looking back we find that the crest of the edge above us is also scarred with quarries, but on the other side the deep green of Highlow almost tempts us to drop down across the railway and invade its cool retreats. As we hesitate, however, a turn of the road brings us into the outskirts of Hathersage itself, whose chief attraction is its church, beautifully situated on the slope above the village. In its chancel you will find several ancient monuments

of the Eyres of Highlow, one of whom fought with Prince Harry at Agincourt. Nor was he the only Derbyshire man who drew the bow or couched the lance in those far off campaigns. For what says the ballad?

> "Recruit me Cheshire and Lancashire
> And Derby hills that are so free,
> No married man nor no widow's son,
> For no widow's curse shall go with me.
> . . . . . .
> Yet there was a jovial bold company."

Another family of Eyres dwelt at North Lees, under Stanage Edge, a most picturesque and happily placed manor house, and still a third branch dwelt at Moorseats, perched on the hill-side above the church. There is rivalry between these two houses, for each claims to be the real Moor House where St. John Eyre Rivers and his sisters dwelt in Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece, *Jane Eyre*. The distinction unquestionably belongs to Moorseats, which corresponds closely with the descriptions in the book, save for some rearrangement, evidently recent, of doors and windows. Charlotte Brontë visited Hathersage—the Morton of the novel—in 1845 to stay with her friend Miss Nussey, whose brother was vicar of the parish and made her an offer of marriage. She would thus constantly hear the name of Eyre. There is also a curious piece of internal evidence, for the clergyman at Morton is made to say, that when he came to the village two years before there was no school and he at once opened one. The school at Hathersage was opened in 1845; the novel was written in 1847. But the identification is certain. Every reader of *Jane Eyre* will remember how Jane fled from Thornfield Hall and Mr. Rochester after the interrupted wedding, and how the driver of the passing coach which she had hailed set her down at Whitcross, after a thirty-six hours' drive, saying that he could take her no further for the money she had given him. Whitcross we are told, was not a town, nor even a hamlet;

it was only a stone pillar set up where four roads met. "Four arms spring from its summit; the nearest town to which these point is, according to the inscription, distant ten miles; the farthest above twenty. From the well-known names of these towns I learn in what country I have lighted; a north-midland shire, dusk with moorland, ridged with mountains; this I see. There are great moors behind and on each hand of me; there are waves of mountains far beyond that deep valley at my feet."

North Lees Hall, near Hathersage.

Where, then, is Whitcross? Months afterwards, when Jane, in obedience to the voice which she heard calling her, returned to seek Mr. Rochester, she tells us that she left Moor House at three o'clock and reached Whitcross soon after four. Whitcross, therefore, must be the cross-roads by the Fox House Inn up above Longshawe and Grindleford Bridge. The description of Morton, as a village mostly agricultural but with a needle-factory and a foundry, and the reference to its church spire and bells, tally with Hathersage, for Ebenezer Rhodes, writing a quarter of a century before, had spoken of the manufacture of metal buttons, steel wire, and needles as being hardly consonant

with the character of Hathersage, "where the farming interest prevails." There is also a reference in *Jane Eyre* to a ball in the neighbouring town of S——, at which the officers of the garrison "put all our young knife grinders and scissor merchants to shame," where the allusion is so plainly to Sheffield that the name might as well have been given in full.

The description of Moor House, the home of the Rivers, may be quoted :—

"They (*i.e.* Diana and Mary Rivers) loved their sequestered home. I, too, in the grey, small, antique structure, with its low roof, its latticed casements, its mouldering walls, its avenue of aged firs—all grown aslant under the stress of mountain winds: its garden dark with yews and holly—and where no flowers but of the hardiest species would bloom—found a charm both potent and permanent. They clung to the purple moors behind and around their dwelling—to the hollow vale into which the pebbly bridle-path leading from their gate descended; and which wound between fern-banks first and then among a few of the wildest little pasture fields that ever bordered a wilderness of heath, or gave sustenance to a flock of grey moorland sheep with their mossy-faced lambs—they clung to this scene, I say, with a perfect enthusiasm of attachment."

The pebbly bridle-path still remains and settles the question of identification. Another passage, which contains an admirable bit of local colour, occurs in the chapter where St. John Rivers, in his masterful way, tells Jane to "put on her things, go out by the kitchen door; take the road towards the head of Marsh Glen." That was his method of inviting her to go for a walk. Jane did as she was bid, and they gained the head of the glen, shut in by the hills.

"Let us rest here," said St. John, as we reached the first stragglers of a battalion of rocks, guarding a sort of pass, beyond which the beck rushed down a waterfall; and where, still a little further, the mountain shook off turf and flower, had only heath for raiment, and crag for gem—where it exaggerated the wild to the savage, and exchanged the fresh for the frowning—where it guarded the forlorn hope of solitude and a last refuge for silence.

I took a seat; St. John stood near me. He looked up the pass and down the hollow: his glance wandered away with the stream and returned

to traverse the unclouded heaven which coloured it; he removed his hat, let the breeze stir his hair and kiss his brow. He seemed in communion with the genius of the haunt; with his eye he bade farewell to something.

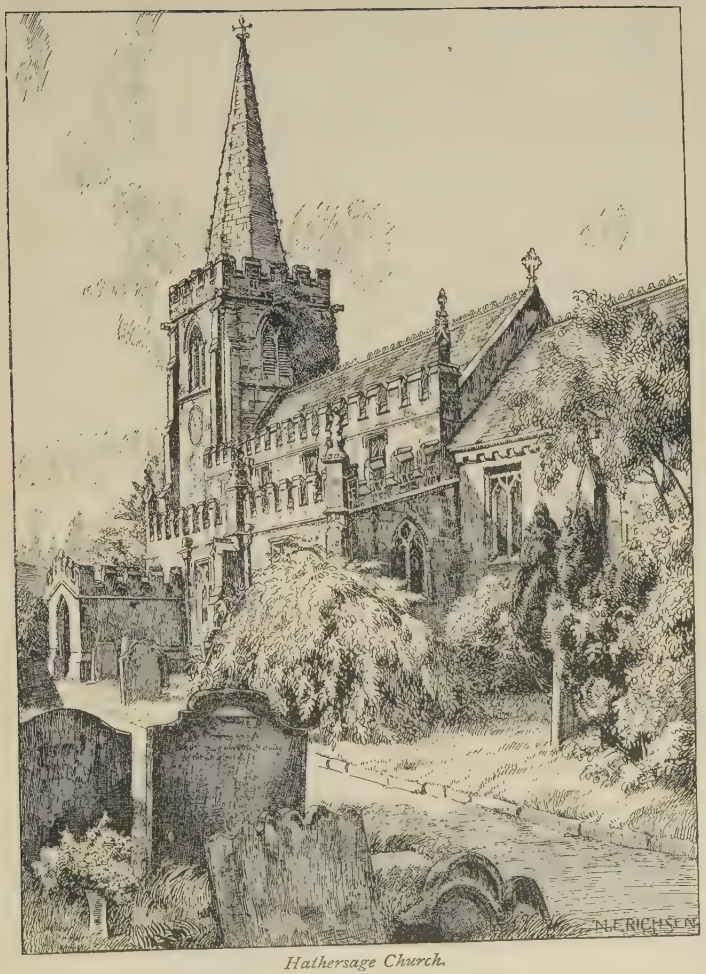
"'And I shall see it again,' he said aloud, 'in dreams, when I sleep by the Ganges: and again, in a more remote hour—when another slumber overcomes me—on the shore of a darker stream.'"

Then followed the strange wooing in which the visionary Rivers, in his deep, relentless voice, claimed Jane as his "help-meet and fellow-labourer" and bade her go with him to India to convert the heathen. "God and nature," he said, "intended you for a missionary's wife. It is not personal but mental endowments they have given you: you are formed for labour, not for love. A missionary's wife you must—shall be. You shall be mine. I claim you—not for my pleasure, but for my Sovereign's service." Poor Jane! The brutal frankness of the zealot's avowal numbed her; his imperious will nearly broke her resolution. She begged a quarter of an hour to think, and, while Rivers "strode a little distance up the pass, threw himself down on a swell of heath, and then lay still," she slowly made up her mind. She agreed to go to India if she might go free. She would obey the call to minister to the heathen, but not to be the wife of one who did not even pretend to love her. Evidently Charlotte Brontë admired St. John Rivers more than most of her modern readers do, who are repelled by his narrow, if sincere, fanaticism and his intolerable priggishness. "If you reject my offer, it is not me you deny, but God. . . . Refuse to be my wife, and you limit yourself for ever to a track of selfish ease and barren obscurity. Tremble lest in that case you should be numbered with those who have denied the faith and are worse than infidels!" Surely one of the strangest marriage proposals in the whole range of fiction!

In Hathersage churchyard is the grave of Little John, friend and lieutenant of Robin Hood. At least tradition affirms that he lies here, between the two yew trees and the two stones, ten feet apart, which mark the resting place of some tall son of Anak. For proof they tell you that a thigh bone was found beneath

the turf long ago—the bone of a man fully eight feet high. Well, if ever there was a Little John, he must have come to the appointed end of all of us and so have been buried, and why not here as well as elsewhere? After all, there is better reason to connect him with Hathersage than with any other place. For did not his bow once hang in the church, and was it not seen in the reign of the first James by that excellent old Oxford antiquarian, Ashmole? Then it was taken down and hung for more than a century in Cannon Hall, near Barnsley. So we may do our best to believe that Little John is sleeping in the pretty churchyard on this fair hill-side looking down into the lovely Vale of Hope and across to the green woods of Highlow.

From Hathersage it is a pleasant walk along the valley of the Derwent to Grindleford. Crossing Grindleford Bridge, you will find in the hamlet of Padley, not far from the railway station, on the Hathersage side, the ruins of Padley Chapel, now desecrated to the uses of a cow-byre. Architecturally, it is of some interest, for it evidently was the private chapel of a large country house, whose site is marked by the mounds at the rear, with projecting masonry here and there. The north and south fronts are of dressed stone; a corbel table runs nearly round the whole structure under the high-pitched roof, and there is a large projecting chimney on the south side. The doors and windows seem to indicate the Decorated style and are not a little puzzling in their situation, which leads one to suspect that the building was in two storeys, the upper one approached by outside staircases. Historically, however, the ruin is one of the most interesting in Derbyshire. Padley Hall was, in the sixteenth century, the principal seat of the Eyre family, the head of whose house had married Joan, the heiress of the Padley estates. These Eyres were staunch Catholics, and Anne, the daughter and heiress of Sir Arthur Eyre, had married Sir Thomas, the heir of Sir Antony Fitzherbert of Norbury. The Fitzherberts, as we saw in an earlier chapter, were also Catholics, and, throughout Elizabeth's reign, lay



Hathersage Church.

under grave suspicion, their houses at Norbury and Padley being subject to constant search. "Padley may be doubted much to be a house of evil resort," wrote one of Burghley's

agents, describing how he had made a raid thither on Candlemas Day in 1588 and found Sir Thomas Fitzherbert's brother, John, and two 'seminaries.' The names of these unfortunate men were Nicholas Garlick and Robert Ludlam, and it was their fate to be hanged, drawn and quartered at Derby for the crime of being priests and, therefore, as a matter of course, false traitors to the Queen's most excellent majesty. For the equally heinous crime of harbouring them John Fitzherbert—despite his brother's entreaties to the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Lord Lieutenant of the county—was put to death; the Padley estates were escheated, and that arch-villain Richard Topcliffe for some time actually dwelt in the house of his victim. "*Tantum religio*"—or what passed for such—"*potuit suadere malorum.*" Every year a devout pilgrimage is paid by local Catholics to the scene where the Padley martyrs were taken prisoners.

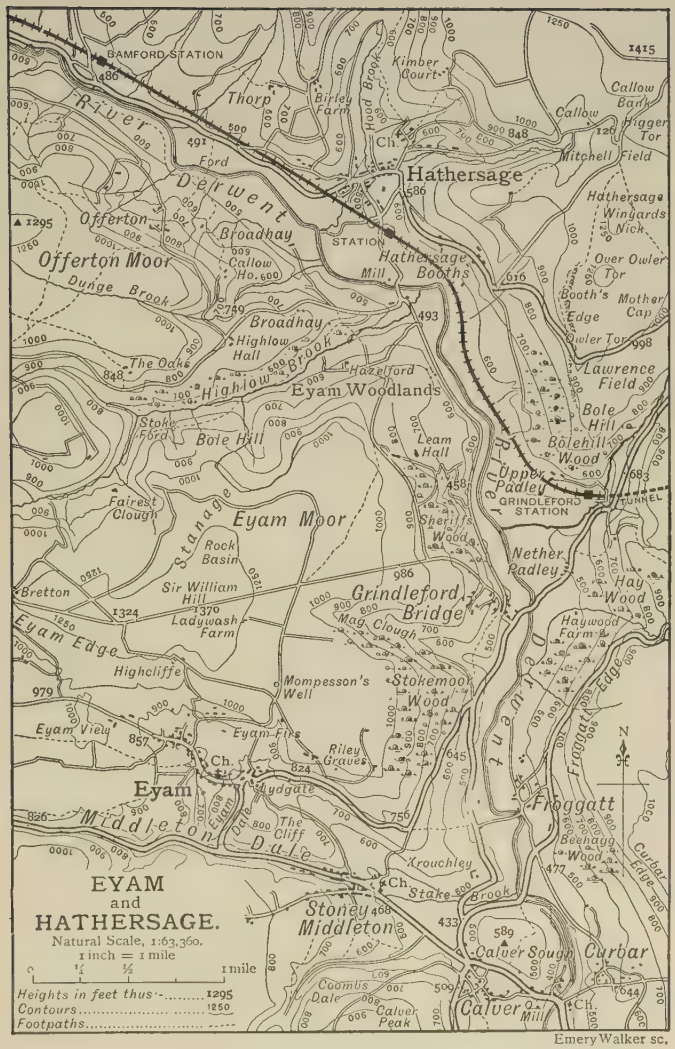
CHAPTER XXIII

Stony Middleton and Eyam

Stony Middleton, on the main road between Sheffield and Chapel-en-le-Frith, three miles from Grindleford Bridge and about the same distance from Baslow, is not a very delectable village. It lies in a deep limestone gorge, whose upper part is as imposing as any in Derbyshire, but the approach from Calver is not promising. On the outskirts is the Hall, the seat of Lord Denman. The family was ennobled in 1834, when Thomas Denman, the eminent King's Counsel, who shared with Brougham the defence of Queen Caroline against the charges of George IV., was raised to the peerage as Baron Denman of Dovedale. He was one of the ablest of the Whig lawyer politicians of the time of the Reform Bill, and took a leading part in the suppression of the slave trade and the abolition of capital punishment for forgery and other minor offences. His speech and cross-examination on behalf of Queen Caroline gained him enormous popularity at a time when hostility to the Court was the surest passport to the favour of the people. Lord Denman, who became Lord Chief Justice in 1832, had inherited in 1812 the Stony Middleton estate from his uncle, Dr. Joseph Denman, the author of a treatise on the Buxton waters. The Denmans were a distinguished medical family. We have met a Dr. Denman at Bakewell, the grandfather of the judge; his son, who migrated to London, became one of the most celebrated

surgeon accoucheurs of his time. Lord Denman died in 1854 and was succeeded by the amiable and accomplished, but somewhat eccentric peer, who lived to the patriarchal age of eighty-nine, and continued nearly to the last to address the House of Lords in interminable orations to which no one paid the faintest attention. When at Stony Middleton, his special hobby was the raising of a certain breed of black pigs. These he was sometimes known to take with him in his carriage when he wished to make presents to his friends.

The Hall has no interest, nor has the church—an ugly building rebuilt in the middle of the eighteenth century. Rhodes tells us that in his time it was shut up for sixteen months together without a single Sunday service being held. Stony Middleton was in the diocese of Lichfield, and one day, when the Bishop happened to be passing through, the landlord of the Moon Inn informed him of the facts, adding that it did not affect him personally, for he never went to church, but he did not like the Methodists to have it all their own way. They, he said, had preachings and meetings several times a week. No wonder Dissent is strong in Derbyshire. Near the church are the remains of an ancient bath—on the site of a supposed Roman one—dedicated to St. Martin. Stony Middleton, like so many Derbyshire villages, had its chalybeate and tepid springs, and Bray, writing in 1777, says the bath was nearly as hot as that of Buxton and was "used with good success by those afflicted with the rheumatism." The village itself is mean and dirty, especially its most populous part, which probably remains unseen by the majority of visitors. For, on the left-hand side, a street climbs precipitously up the hill, and the cottages are closely huddled together in any sort of disorder, clinging as best they can to the ledges of the rock. To the right of the ugly market cross houses of a better class are found, and a pleasant foot-path leads up among these through the fields to Eyam, affording an excellent view of the Derwent Valley towards Chatsworth. Stony Middleton, however, is not the flourishing

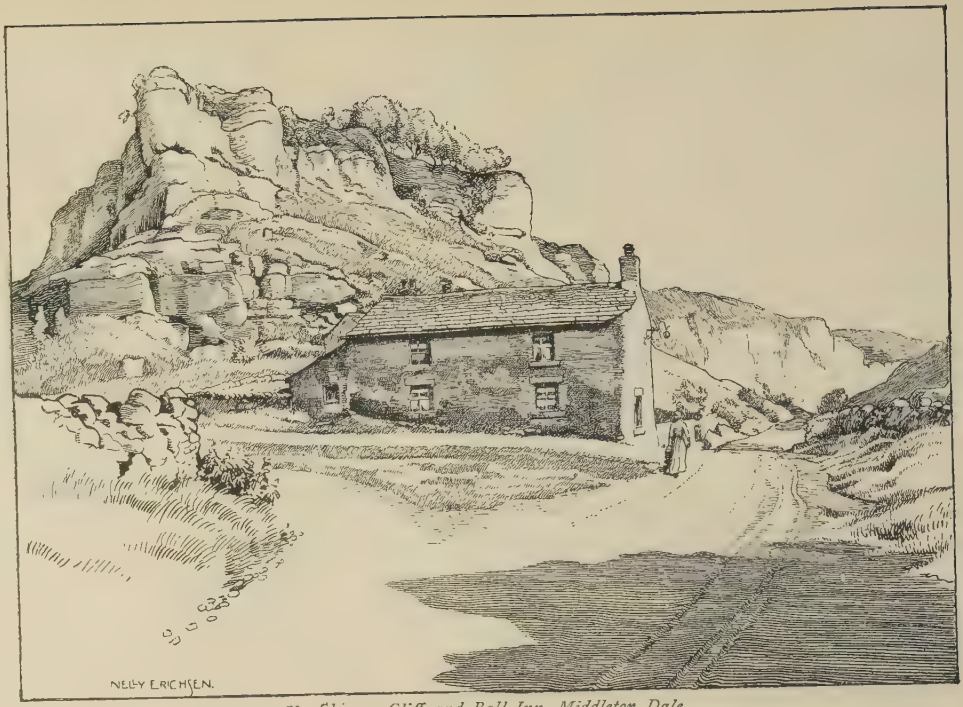


Emery Walker sc.

place it was in the palmy days of the mining and lime-burning industries. Now hardly an ounce of lead is got out of the hills; the lime-kilns are mostly closed; and the boot factories are only sufficient to keep the village from want, not enough to make it prosperous.

The dale by which you leave it is worth leisurely inspection. It has its Lover's Leap, better authenticated than most, for dates and names are given to confound the sceptic. A girl called Baddeley, whether moved by jealousy or unrequited love is not stated, leaped down from the top of the limestone cliff which towers up over the main road. Like all women suicides, she took off her hat and laid it carefully on the grass before she jumped. But instead of breaking every bone in her body, she only received a few bruises and was able to walk home, shaken and surprised. That was in 1760: she died—still unwed—many years afterwards. The Lover's Leap marks the beginning of a fine ridge which guards the road on the right-hand side for fully a mile, the limestone assuming the most fantastic shapes of pinnacle and tower. One of these battlemented rocks is called the Castle, and near by, at the base of the cliffs, is a cavern, now blocked up, where was found, many years after his disappearance, the body of a murdered Scotch pedlar. The shoe buckles alone established the identification. The left side of the gorge is as uninteresting as the right is attractive. It is simply a high, tumbled bank, grassy for the most part, though here and there the rock crops out. Old quarries and lime-kilns abound. It was in Middleton Dale, we are told, that Lord Duncannon was riding in 1743 when his horse stumbled against a piece of spar. He picked it up, examined it, and thought it would make a pretty ornament. So he sent it to Watson, the Bakewell statuary, suggesting that it should be turned into a vase, and this was the origin of the Ashford marble and spar works.

A mile from Stony Middleton we come to a little roadside inn, The Ball, where a by-road turns up to Eyam, half a mile



The Shining Cliff and Ball Inn, Middleton Dale.

distant on the right. The ascent is sharp, but the lane is one of great beauty, for trees grow luxuriantly wherever they can gain a footing on the high rocky sides, and enters Eyam, whose main street runs east and west, at its eastern end. A minor road on the right bears down towards Stony Middleton, leading into the footpath that we spoke of. This is called the Lydgate, pronounced as though it were spelt Lidgett, a name usually applied to a narrow lane, and common in Derbyshire and Yorkshire. The principal road to the right leads to Grindleford. Eyam stands on a high terrace above Middleton Dale and below Eyam Edge, an attractive line of hills running parallel with the dale, and consists of one long main street, with a curious break in the continuity of the line just past Eyam Hall. It lies high, yet there are protecting and sheltering heights above it; it is just sufficiently off the main lines of traffic to give one the sense of being aloof rather than remote. Eyam, which is full of interesting associations, is decidedly one of the most winsome villages of the Peak.

A Christian church has stood here since before Norman times, and in the churchyard is an ancient Saxon cross, elaborately sculptured, both on head and arms and on its shapely broad shaft. This is the pride of Eyam, and is nearly complete. Tradition says that it was found on the moors. In the eighteenth century it lay neglected in a corner of the churchyard. The missing fragment of the shaft was well remembered in Rhodes' day: the sexton told him that it lay about for many years and was finally "knocked to pieces for domestic purposes." That the cross stands where it does is due to Howard, the prison reformer and philanthropist, who visited Eyam—he was a friend of the Sewards—shortly before he left England for the last time. It was his admiration which induced the people of Eyam to get the cross set up on a new base. The chief risk to which it is now exposed is not neglect but the

vandalism of the people who, during the summer months, come driving into Eyam in brake-loads. The only way to pre-

Eyam Cross.

serve it from the wantonness of those who think it sport to climb up and sit on the arms, is to surround it by spiked iron

railings. The elaborate sun-dial on the south wall of the church is happily out of reach.

Near to the cross and the dial, and under the shade of a very shapely yew tree, is the table tomb of Catherine Mompesson, which should also be protected from the ravages of these heedless Goths. It is getting badly worn; the sculptures, at one side, of the symbols of death, an hour-glass and wings, will soon be quite defaced. The lettering has already been repaired in places with inlet pieces of stone. Yet this is a tomb which the people of Eyam ought to delight in preserving, for Catherine Mompesson was the heroic wife of the heroic rector who won for Eyam its immortality of fame during the Plague. "*Mors mihi lucrum*" ("Death to me is gain") says one inscription on the tomb; "*Cave*" ("Be on your guard") says another, and a third, "*Nescitis horam*," reminds us that we know not the hour.

The church has suffered from the restorer's hands. The tower and south aisle are of the fifteenth century; the original building was of the thirteenth; the restorations are of the nineteenth. Of the Norman work, one pillar and the font alone survive. A second ancient font preserved in the church was found some years ago at Padley, near Grindleford. In the chancel is a carved oak chair which belonged to Mompesson with the legend "Mom. 1662. Eyam." This was happily discovered by a former vicar of Eyam, after he had left the parish, in a second-hand shop in Liverpool. Another curiosity in the vestry consists of two old pictures of Moses and Aaron—similar to those at Hope—which used to hang on the west wall—until they were replaced by stained windows dealing with the same subjects. This vestry was for a long time the sanctuary of a certain incumbent of Eyam against the officers of the law. The story goes that the Rev. Joseph Hunt one day "gloried and drank deep" in a neighbouring inn. While in his cups he made drunken love to the landlord's daughter and, to amuse his boon companions, went through a form of

marriage with her. The Bishop of Lichfield heard of the disgraceful scene and insisted upon Hunt's marrying the girl, and then a Derby lady, to whom he had been engaged, brought an action for breach of promise, and naturally obtained swinging damages from a virtuously indignant jury. The rector could not pay and, to evade arrest, shut himself up in the vestry, where his parishioners supplied him with food and warned him when danger threatened. He died in 1709.

In the churchyard is a ponderous and ugly gritstone monument to the memory of William Wood, who died in 1865. He wrote the Plague chronicles of Eyam and collected the tales and traditions of the neighbourhood, which he set down in simple and vigorous English.

> "Men but like visions are,
> Time all doth claim,
> He lives who dies and leaves
> A lasting name."

So runs the inscription, and the churchyard is full of odd epitaphs, both in prose and verse, many of the latter being written by the Rev. Peter Cunningham, who was resident curate here for many years, while the rector, Prebendary Seward, lived at Lichfield and drew the tithes. Cunningham had a heavy touch which is unmistakable: we much prefer the simple cottage-made rhyme which runs:—

> "Since life is short and death is always nigh,
> On many years to come do not rely."

On the western side of the churchyard is a family burial place, as forlorn as any to be found outside a disused London cemetery, where the sooty and unkempt ivy strangling the mouldering gravestones makes a picture of woe that strikes a chill to the heart. Rhodes described it as "an oblong structure, formed by eight stone columns placed at regular distances, and surrounded with urns, the intervening space between the columns being built up with stone walling; and on two sides

are small iron-grated windows, not unlike the light holes in a prison." Its heavy leaden roof had been stripped off and sold by the family! In the eighty-five years which have elapsed since Rhodes saw it, Time has been busily trying in his slow way to throw it to the ground. He would have succeeded long since, had not the bulging walls been pinned and strengthened with iron bars. But despite these Time is winning. The iron gratings in the windows are eaten through with rust; the urns are tottering; the walls are gaping. It would not take a house-breaker five minutes to level the whole place in ruin. Inside, the gravestones are choked with weeds, growing tall and lank with repulsive vigour. One wonders sometimes, when one sees carefully tended graves, whether the dead have any joy of this tending. It is a pretty, graceful idea; yet we should put it from us. For what if the dead be also sensible of neglect?

The Rectory abuts on to the eastern side of the churchyard. This was the birthplace in 1747 of Anna Seward, called in her day "The Swan of Lichfield," though the title is hardly one which modern critics would spontaneously assign to her. Her father, the Rev. Thomas Seward, was Rector of Eyam for many years; her mother, a daughter of Dr. Hunter, Johnson's old schoolmaster at Lichfield, was a society-loving lady, and did not find Eyam, standing remote from the world amid the hills of the Peak, a very congenial place of residence. She was anxious, therefore, that her husband should obtain preferment elsewhere, and her daughter Anna declares that she was the real cause of the family leaving the village. "Mrs. Seward," she wrote, "was in the bloom of youth and loveliness, and though married to the man of her choice and the object of his most devoted affection, she never ceased to regret the gay and more discriminating society of her native Lichfield, where she had been the object of general admiration. She felt that, amidst its enlightened circle and elegant society, the talents of Mr. Seward, of which she was laudably proud, would be more justly appreciated and his qualifications receive their

more gratifying tribute." That is very nicely put for the eye of the outside world, but we suspect that the Rector's wife was very much moped and "consumedly bored" at Eyam, that she put on airs with the parishioners, and was distinctly querulous at times in the family circle. We may be tolerably certain, moreover, that the Rector was equally convinced that his superior qualities were wasted at Eyam. Dr. Johnson, who knew him well at Lichfield and frequently saw him at Dr. Taylor's house at Ashbourne, did not like him greatly. "Sir!" he said of him to Boswell in 1777, after taking tea in his company, "his ambition is to be a fine talker; so he goes to Buxton and such places, where he may find companies to listen to him. And, Sir, he is a valetudinarian, one of those who are always mending themselves. I do not know a more disagreeable character than a valetudinarian, who thinks he may do anything that is for his ease and indulges himself in the grossest freedoms. Sir, he brings himself to the state of a hog in a sty." This is scathing, indeed. Yet Johnson should have been the last person in the world to abuse anyone for being anxious to shine as a talker; his own manners were exceedingly trying to the fastidious; and, at any rate in his later years, he was very full of his own ailments. Boswell, however, gives us a much more flattering sketch of Mr. Seward in 1776, for he describes him as a "genteel, well-bred, dignified clergyman. He had travelled with Lord Charles Fitzroy, uncle of the present Duke of Grafton, who had died abroad, and he had lived much in the great world. He was an ingenious and literary man, had published an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, and written verses in Dodsley's collection." A year or two later Boswell called upon him at Lichfield and found him in bed with a cold, "dressed in his black gown, with a white flannel nightgown above it, so that he looked like a Dominican friar." Perhaps he was a trifle pompous, but not more than was then thought befitting a canon residentiary, who lived in a bishop's palace. Thomas Seward left little mark upon the

Parish of Eyam during his ministry there, save that he "new fronted" the rectory, and he returned to Lichfield—though without resigning Eyam—when his daughter Anna was a child of six, and her sister a year younger.

The old front of the rectory faced the road and the porch was left standing, when the alterations were made, though the door into the house was blocked up. The new front, put in by Mr. Seward, looks on to the church. This house contains a fine oak staircase, and memorials of the plague in the shape of a little oak cupboard, from one of the Plague Cottages, and the plague burial registers. The latter, however, do not seem to be the originals, which were, probably enough, destroyed for fear of infection and a fair copy made. As a girl, Anna Seward delighted to spend some weeks of every summer in her old home and, writing in 1764, when she was seventeen, she gives a sketch of her friends in the village, for she adds, there were "some liberal-minded people," even in Eyam. Another letter, dated from Lichfield in 1765, contains a detailed description of Eyam village and its scenery, from which we may make a quotation. After lamenting that she has not "a Claude or Salvatorial pencil" to lend graphic force to her words, she says :—

"Eyam, though but a village, is near a mile in length and considerably populous. It sweeps in a waving line among the mountains, upon a kind of natural terrace, perhaps a quarter of a mile in breadth . . . . On the right hand, to its eastern termination, the mountain, in whose bosom it stands, is crossed by another and still higher mountain . . . . The top of this eastern elevation, so majestic and picturesque amidst all its barren brownness, presents us on ascending it with the eagle's view of several lovely valleys, separated from each other by a number of small hills, winding down to the right along the range of those vales, and at about four miles distance the eye perceives the Palace of Chatsworth rising, in golden beauty, from beneath its dark and pendant woods, which are flanked by a range of grey, stony and bleak mountains. The south side of my native mansion, the parsonage (which stands by the church in nearly the centre of the village) looks upon a mountainous knoll, whose surface is always green : the sheep which feed upon it have made it glossy and

smooth as a bowling turf. From childhood have I delighted to observe, amidst the gradual clearing of a foggy day, the mists which had enveloped the head of this round and lesser mountain, rolling away by degrees, and its bright green summit peeping through them and imbibing the soft gilding of the sun's beams. Its height above the village is moderate. It is called the Cliff, and its top affords a level and lawny walk, of about an hundred and fifty yards extent, before it descends. The summit overlooks that stupendous Middleton or, more properly, Eyam Dale, so well known to those who make excursions from Buxton. This dale is narrow and the vast and sterile rocks rise on each side to a sublime height. No beauty of wood or field softens the barren grandeur of the scene. It is here that the sterner graces have their aeries : here that the seasons suffer no visible alteration, except when the craggy steeps are covered with snow and shoot forth millions of their pensile and horrent icicles."

Beyond the church, and opposite the entrance to a little dale called the Delf, is Eyam Hall, one of the best preserved of the Derbyshire manor houses, a delightful home in grey stone, the possession of which must be a constant joy. It was built by Thomas Wright, one of the Wrights of Longstone, soon after the plague, the fabric being completed in 1676. This date appears on the leaden rain spouts, and the hall itself has never been dwelt in save by descendants of those whose initials are there traced. It stands back from the village street, being approached through two courts, the lower with smooth lawns, the upper flagged with stone. A low parapet wall with broad flight of steps divides the two. The principal garden lies to the east side, with a fine old bowling-green surrounded by yew trees and terraces, grass walks and dense hedges of yew. The shallow centre part of the house is almost wholly covered with creepers which spread round to the wings. Eyam Hall remains just as it was when it was built ; even the small panes of glass in the beautiful mullioned windows are unchanged. This glass is of a delightful green tint, and many of the panes are scratched with names and dates, covering a period of more than two centuries. The house contains a fine oak staircase with twisted balustrades, which together with the doors and panels of the principal rooms came from the older house of the end

of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century. Eyam Hall is Tudor in practically every detail, though built in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. The explanation is that it was an exact copy of the old Bradshaw Hall at Eyam, of which only one forlorn wing now remains, and, indeed, was actually built from the stone of that dismantled house.

Until recent years several old customs survived in Eyam, which have now fallen into disuse. One was a mysterious game

Eyam Hall.

called Ball, which consisted of dragging about from house to house the figure of a horse, lit up with candles placed in its inside. It was wheeled into the kitchens to the accompaniment of a song. Another was a form of mumming known as Guising, in which gentle as well as simple took part and visited one another's houses, it being a point of honour to dress so that recognition was impossible. A third was a species of Morris dance, indulged in on May Day. The inhabitants of the first house in the village began it by taking hands and

dancing to the second house. There they were joined by their neighbours and danced on together to the third, until the whole long street of Eyam was full of the dancing throng.

An Eyam celebrity, who must not be passed over in silence, is Richard Furness, the poet. Born in 1791, he began life as a currier's apprentice at Chesterfield, where he picked up a little French from the French officers living on parole in the town, learnt music and began to lisp in numbers. He must also have been a seriously-minded youth, for he joined the Wesleyans, became a local preacher and figured on "the plan." In 1812, when his time was up at the currier's, he tramped to London. There he enlisted as a volunteer soldier, and on one occasion occupied the pulpit in the City Road Chapel—the Temple of Methodism—at the invitation of Dr. Adam Clarke. Furness, however, was a rolling stone, and returned to Derbyshire, where he quitted the Methodists in disgust because they reproved him for joining in a patriotic song that was being sung at a public house in celebration of some victory over the French. In 1813 he started business as a currier at Eyam, and wooed Frances Ibbotson, daughter of the the vicar of Hathersage. When the vicar refused to countenance the wooing, Furness promptly ran away with the girl. A romantic elopement out of the parsonage window was followed, alas! by very dull prose at Eyam, for his shop was an utter failure, and he had to quit his native village under a cloud. Furness then went to be master of the Free School at Dore, a few miles away across the hills, and remained there from 1821 until his death in 1857, acting as the vicar's factotum and the all-round handyman of the village. His rhyming description—and advertisement—of his many qualifications runs as follows:—

> "I, Richard Furness, schoolmaster, Dore,
> Keep parish books and pay the poor,
> Draw plans for buildings and indite
> Letters for those who cannot write;

Make wills and recommend a proctor,
Cure wounds, let blood with any doctor,
Draw teeth, sing psalms, the hautboy play
At chapel on each holy day,
Paint sign-boards, cart-names at command,
Survey and plot estates of land,
Collect at Easter one in ten,
And on the Sunday say 'Amen.'"

Yet with all these accomplishments he never earned more than eighty pounds a year and usually his income was much less. He was one of those wayward men of talent who might with application do great things, yet invariably waste their opportunities. His most important work, a satire entitled *The Rag Bag*, was published in 1832. We have no space to deal with the poet's bitter invective against the dishonesty and callousness of the world, but some of his references to the scenery of Derbyshire well deserve to be rescued from oblivion. Furness, for example, thus describes the dalesman's passionate love for his native hills and his constant longing to turn towards home :—

"Now see him downward in the distance move,
By Derwent, Wye or by the silver Dove ;
To streams like his the rich Pactolus yields,
To scenes like his Arcadia's happy fields ;
Parnassus famed sinks in his glowing mind
And Peak's bleak mountains leave it far behind :
Touched by the magnet of the place he loves,
He still veers homeward whereso'er he roves,
And joys he more, though barren be the spot,
To view the star that glitters o'er his cot
Than if through distant lands he daily rolled
With wealth and ease in chariots of gold.
For there's a point in Heaven where man is blest,
A place on earth there is, where wanderers rest,
To that would souls, to this would travellers come,
That happy point, this resting place is home."

Again, in his introduction to another poem, *The Astrologer*, he says :—

"Hail! holy forms of Nature—mountains bleak!
Your minstrel still—still loves his native Peak:
Oft has he wandered on your heaths, unknown,
While his wild harp has wept to storms alone:
Where high Sir William lifts, in clouds o'ercast,
His giant shoulders on the western blast—
Peers o'er a thousand dales, and looking out,
Views Win-Hill, Mam and distant Kinderscout.
Below the hills, where the first morning beam
Pours all its glory on the graves of Eyam,
Where Hollow-brook, in angry winter floods,
Falls, foams, and flows down Roylee's shelving woods."

These lines have more life, feeling and vigour in them than are to be found in any of Anna Seward's frigid references to Derbyshire, though her attachment to Eyam and its hills was evidently as sincere as that of Furness.

Allusion has already been made to the Rev. Peter Cunningham. He was the son of a naval officer and, after being curate at Almondbury, near Huddersfield, was curate at Eyam for eighteen years, acting for that absentee pluralist, Mr. Seward. He resigned in 1790 on Mr. Seward's death. Ebenezer Rhodes devotes to him and his poetry some pages of his *Peak Scenery*, but the extracts which he gives, notably the long one from Cunningham's poem on Chatsworth, are not to our modern taste. All life is crushed out of the lines by the weight of otiose epithets and ponderous classical allusions, and even his eulogist admits that as a poet "he had many beauties chequered with a considerable portion of defect." Much more admirable than his verse was his whole-souled devotion to his cure. "The majority of his parishioners," says Rhodes, "were poor and ignorant, and he strove to better their manners and improve their situation in life by informing their minds. His attention to the education of the youth of the village was, at one time, truly exemplary: regardless of pecuniary compensation, he took them under his tuition, and devoted much of his time to their improvement. So long, indeed, as he remained at Eyam, none were permitted to want instruction: hence he

was beloved, and the grateful recollections of his pupils still dwell upon his name with delight."

> "Christe's lore and His Apostles' twelve,
> He taught but first he followed it himself."

Such a man was certain to remain poor. When he quitted Eyam he acted for some years as chaplain to an English factory at Smyrna, but lost all his effects by fire and found himself obliged, through lack of means, to cross the greater part of Europe on foot. Eventually, through the Devonshire interest, Fox gave him a small living in the gift of the Crown, but he did not live long to enjoy it. Rhodes tells us how, when Mr. Seward preached his farewell sermon at Eyam, he pronounced a glowing eulogy upon Cunningham, referring to him as "a continued living sermon to us all, our general friend, our delight and our joy." Then he went on, "Think not that I have put so much of the pulpit duty upon him, since we have been here together, through idleness and indolence. No, it was that I would not disappoint so many longing ears that wished to hear him. It was that I rejoiced at the occasion of really preferring his sermons to my own, and of giving so eminent and worthy, though so young a man, the right hand of fellowship. Grey hairs may receive instruction from his lips and the aged bow down to him, and that because he keepeth the commandments of the Lord, and delighteth in the law of his God." Without doubting the sincerity of these words—the more remarkable because rectors rarely confess quite so candidly that their curates preach better than themselves—we fancy that Cunningham was the willing horse of the two, and that the society-loving rector was exceedingly glad of a curate who saved him the trouble of preparing new sermons.

Writing to Mr. Seward at Lichfield in 1776, Cunningham inveighs against the local Dissenters:—"I have still," he says, "the inexpressible satisfaction to observe your church more crowded than I am assured it has ever been remembered at this season of the year. No more Methodist preachers appear in

the chapel at Eyam : the few that resort to them at Grindleford Bridge are such as an angel from Heaven would have no influence with. And as I suppose you do not expect me to work miracles, since nothing less will convert them, they must even be left to prey upon garbage and follow the wandering fires of their own vapourish imaginations?" Half in jest, half in earnest, he adds that his friend, Major Trafford, has settled in Eyam as resident magistrate and will be a terror to evil doers. Doubtless, the bark of the Rev. Peter was much more terrifying than his bite, but this angry reference to the Methodists has an interesting side-light thrown upon it by an entry in Wesley's *Journal* for the year 1766, where he says, "The eagerness with which the poor people of Eyam devoured the Word made me amends for the cold ride over the snowy mountains."

The names of Peter Cunningham, Anna Seward, William Newton, and the famous Major André occur in conjunction with a very ghostly story which will interest those who believe in the significance of dreams. Anna Seward on one occasion took Major André—who was an intimate friend of theirs at Lichfield and betrothed to Honora Sneyd—over to Eyam to introduce him to Cunningham and Newton. Before they arrived, Cunningham related to Newton an extraordinary dream. He dreamed that he was in a forest and saw a horseman riding at great speed towards him. Suddenly three other horsemen darted out of ambush, rushed upon the solitary rider and took him prisoner. Then the scene changed; Cunningham saw a gibbet, and dangling from it was the form of the first horseman. When Miss Seward and Major André arrived, Cunningham was startled to recognise in André the face of the man whom he had seen hanged in his dream. Such stories are only interesting when they are provided with a proper sequel, and in this case the sequel— the hanging of Major André as a spy by the order of Washington—was one of the most poignant episodes of the American War of Independence.

CHAPTER XXIV

EYAM AND THE PLAGUE: BRETTON CLOUGH AND HIGHLOW

Eyam is famous in story for the heroism with which its inhabitants endured the Great Plague for more than a year, from September 1665 to October 1666. It suffered and became immortalised through suffering, chiefly owing to the calm devotion and inspiring example of its Rector, William Mompesson. Let us briefly tell the oft-told tale again. One day in September, 1665, a box of clothes came down to Eyam from London addressed to a tailor living in one of the cottages fronting the street at the west end of the church, which still bear the name of the Plague Cottages. It was opened by a certain George Vicars, who died a few days later after infecting all the household. Then, as no concealment was possible, Eyam knew that the dreaded plague had broken out in its midst. The villagers must have heard how London had been scourged through the summer of the previous year, and they were aware by previous experience of the ravaging power of this terrible pestilence. For, only thirty years before, in the neighbouring village of Curbar, several families had been entirely wiped out. The plague was no new visitant to Derbyshire.

Before the end of September six had died; in October twenty-three more victims were added to the list; in November seven, in December nine. Snow and hard frost checked the spread, but could not destroy the germs of the disease. It broke out anew with the spring. During June there were

nineteen deaths, in July fifty-six, in August seventy-seven, and it looked as though the whole population were doomed. But at last the turn came. September saw twenty-four burials, and the first eleven days of October fourteen more. Then the plague was stayed, leaving, according to the usual story, only a pitiful remnant of ninety persons out of a population of three hundred and fifty. This, however, is undoubtedly an exaggeration, for the register of births and deaths shows that the population must have been from eight to nine hundred. Throughout most of this terrible time Eyam was cut off from the world, by choice and also by necessity. The country-side grew frantic with terror when it heard of the mortality in Eyam. As far off as Sheffield, strangers who were suspected of coming from Eyam or near it were driven away with sticks and showers of stones. People forgot their humanity; their panic left no room for pity. We would not say that they were more heartless then than now. In the last great cholera and small-pox epidemics in England and, in more recent years, during epidemics in the Highlands, the same phenomenon has manifested itself. And so the rigid isolation of Eyam was, perhaps, not quite so voluntary as some writers have supposed. The people who lived in the neighbouring villages shut the gates of mercy and compassion on any fugitive from Eyam.

What Mompesson did was to persuade his people, with some show of resignation, to remain in the village. He gave them consolation; he inspired them with hope. He wrought them up to that fine exaltation of spirit which nerved them to face death as disciplined sailors face it in shipwreck—he made the manifest duty of self-sacrifice appear reasonable. We do not know at what precise moment in that ghastly twelvemonth Eyam was cut off from the world and began to depend for its sustenance upon the supplies of food which were set at certain appointed places on the boundaries. The supply was organised by the Earl of Devonshire, who nobly remained at Chatsworth. Mompesson had sent away his two little children at an early

stage; his wife Catherine stayed by his side and was his most devoted helper until she, too, was stricken down in August. This drew from him, on September 1st, a most pathetic letter to his patron, Sir George Savile, in which he says, "This is the saddest news that ever my pen could write. The destroying angel having taken up his quarters within my habitation, my dearest wife is gone to her eternal rest, and is invested with a

Eyam Church.

crown of righteousness, having made a happy end. Indeed, had she loved herself as well as me, she had fled from the pit of destruction with the sweet babes, and might have prolonged her days, but she was resolved to die a martyr to my interest. My drooping spirits are much refreshed with her joys, which I think are unutterable." Mompesson thought that he, too, was doomed, and spoke of himself as "a dying man." But he escaped the infection. "As for my part," he wrote in the following November, "I cannot say that I had ever better health than

during the time of the dreadful visitation, neither can I say that I have had any symptoms of the disease. My man had the distemper and, upon the appearance of a tumour, I gave him several chemical antidotes, which had a very kind operation and, with the blessing of GOD, kept the venom from the heart. Then, after the rising broke, he was very well." Mompesson quitted Eyam not long afterwards and went to Eakring in Nottinghamshire, a living in the gift of the Saviles, where he died in 1708. He became a Prebend of York and Southwell: had he wished it, he might have been Dean of Lincoln, but he declined the dignity.

Mompesson was not the only clergyman in Eyam during the plague. His predecessor in the rectory was also there, the Rev. Thos. Stanley, who had been ejected in 1662, after an eighteen years' ministry, because he would not subscribe to the Corporation Act of 1661. He stood by Mompesson's side and did his duty just as nobly. So when, a little later, some paltry-minded bigots appealed to the Earl of Devonshire, as Lord Lieutenant of the county, to have Stanley turned out of Eyam as a recusant nonconformist, the Earl refused with just indignation. "It is more reasonable," he said, "that the whole country should testify their thankfulness to him who, together with his care of the town, had taken such care, as none else did, to prevent the infection of the towns adjacent." This generous rebuke did the Earl great honour.

Those who would learn every detail that is to be known of the plague in Eyam should read the little book in which William Wood, the local historian, gathered up the traditions still current fifty years ago concerning it. Others, perhaps, may find pleasure in the lengthy poem by William and Mary Howitt, entitled *The Desolation of Eyam*, which this pietistic pair of poets wrote as far back as 1827. We may quote one or two stanzas. The first is a description of Eyam itself:—

"Among the verdant mountains of the Peak,
There lies a quiet hamlet, where the slope
Of pleasant uplands wards the north winds bleak:
Below, wild dells romantic pathways ope:
Around, above it, spreads a shadowy cope
Of forest trees: flower, foliage and clear rill
Wave from the cliffs, or down ravines elope:
It seems a place charmed from the power of ill
By sainted words of old:—so lovely, lone and still."

Another stanza describes the outbreak of the plague:—

"Out it bursts, a dreadful cry of death;
'The Plague! the Plague!' the withering language flew,
And faintness followed on its rapid breath;
And all hearts sunk, as pierced with lightning through.
'The Plague! the Plague!' no groundless panic grew,
But there, sublime in awful darkness, trod
The pest; and lamentation, as he slew,
Proclaimed his ravage in each sad abode,
Mid frenzied shrieks for aid and vain appeals to God."

One more stanza, suggested by the tomb of Catherine Mompesson, is worth quoting:—

"And be it so for ever! It is glory.
Tombs, mausoleums, scrolls, whose weak intent
Time laughs to scorn, as he blots out their story,
Are not the mighty spirit's monument.
He builds with the world's wonder—his cement
Is the world's love—he lamps his beamy shrine
With fires of the soul's essence, which, unspent,
Burn on for ever. Such bright tomb is thine,
Great patriot, and so rests that peerless Catherine."

To my mind the most pathetic memorial of the plague and the spot best worth visiting in Eyam is the little plot of ground where lie the Riley Graves. The name is curiously misleading, for one naturally imagines that the Riley Graves signify the burial place of people named Riley. But it is not so. Riley is not a surname but a place name, as is best shown by its variant spelling, Roylee. To reach the spot you take the main road to Grindleford from the east end of Eyam, until you come

to a gate on the left which runs up through a wood. Turn through here and ascend to the quarry by a good road, and then, towards the end of a large field beyond, you will see a stile and a footpath leading to a small stone enclosure of irregular oval shape. Tread reverently, for this place has seen the utmost intensity of human anguish, and the memory of such tragic suffering should hallow it. In this little patch of ground, in a wide open field on the hill-side and commanding a lovely prospect, are seven graves, all of which bear the name of Hancock. One, that of John Hancock, the head of the family, is a table tomb with the date Aug 7, 1666, and the inscription :—

" Remember, Man,
As thou goest by,
As thou art now,
Even so was I.
As I doe now
So must thou lye,
Remember, Man,
That thou shalt die."

The Latin monition, "*Nescitis horam ; Vigilate ; Orate*" is also written on this tomb, doubtless an echo of the inscription on the tomb of Catherine Mompesson. The Hancocks were working people who would not, in normal circumstances, sleep beneath Latin. John Hancock, the father, died on August 7th. He had lost a son and daughter on the 3rd : another son and another daughter died on the same day as himself ; a third daughter died on the 9th, and yet a fourth on the 10th. Seven deaths in the house in eight days ! Only the mother escaped, and she, so tradition says, buried her dead with her own hands, dragging the bodies down the hill-side, frantic and distraught with grief. There was no one to help—the people of Eyam had their own dead to bury. Her neighbours, the Talbots, a family of father, mother, two sons and three daughters, had been wiped out utterly in the previous month. They had kept a smithy on the road-side. May we not say, then, that this spot

is hallowed by the memory of great suffering? Rhodes tells us that the gravestones originally lay flat, and that in his time the ground was ploughed all around them until they were enclosed by a Mr. Bird, a resident of Eyam, who bought the property and planted a few fir trees within the walls. These have long since vanished. As a matter of fact, the table tomb of John Hancock is the only one *in situ*; the others were scattered over the field until collected and enclosed by Mr. Bird. It is thought the ancient ash tree about a hundred yards away marks the site of the Hancocks' house, but no traces are to be seen, and one can imagine how the place would be shunned for years by the villagers, fearful lest it should contain the seeds of infection. The mournfulness of the whole pitiful tragedy comes upon us as we stand in the tiny enclosure and read the names upon the gravestones, and in few places is the mind so powerfully impressed by the sense of old, unhappy, far off things. Then, as now, the valley of the Derwent spread away in all its green loveliness; the smoke curled up blue from the roofs of the houses in Middleton Dale below; and the hills lifted up their stately ridges. The prospect must have been the same for the stricken woman as for us, save that when she cast her eyes behind her she saw a desolate house and a cold hearth.

From the Riley Graves let us visit another mute relic of the plague—Mompesson's Well. Returning past the quarry to about a hundred yards from the gate where we left the main road, we take a footpath to the right, which soon joins a cart track, and, where this runs out, find a second footpath, also to the right, and follow its steep course up the hill for half a mile through Eyam Firs till it issues in a road. Turn again rightwards for a few hundred yards, passing a pond and a by-road, until you reach a green space which slopes down to Mompesson's Well, its head covered with a block of roughly-shaped limestone. The well itself is about four feet long by three broad, and is some eighteen inches in depth. The pan is usually full, and the water finds its exit by overflowing into a

marshy swamp. It can hardly be said that Mompesson's Well repays the toil of those who seek it. The scene has no pretensions to beauty. Close by are two disused mines, the New Engines and the Lady Wash, whose chimneys and heaps of white tailings would ruin any landscape. Here, however, there is no landscape at all, and the road itself leads nowhere from the ordinary tourist's point of view. It was, of course, just this remoteness which caused the well to be chosen in the plague time as a suitable place where food might be set for the infected village. A similar spot used for a similar purpose bears the interesting name of Qualmstones at Sarden, in Oxfordshire, qualm being an old word for pestilence.

Better worth visiting than Mompesson's Well is the Cucklet Church, which lies in the lovely little dell, locally known as the Delf. It is private ground, but the keys are obtainable at Eyam Hall on payment of a trifling fee the proceeds of which are devoted to local charities. The Delf is a secluded valley in miniature, its grassy slopes dropping abruptly from the level of the road, and dotted here and there with trees. At its foot is a tiny stream, and the ground rises equally steep on the other side. In a few yards the dell winds and opens out into an irregular amphitheatre, with banks of easier ascent, and facing these is a bluff of limestone, curiously arched in places. This is called the Cucklet Church, and from here Mompesson preached to his rapidly thinning but never wavering flock, when it was thought too dangerous to hold services in the parish church. Since Mompesson's day there has been no more plague in Eyam, and Anna Seward's sensational story of a number of persons falling victims in 1757 from the opening of some of the plague graves is not borne out by the registers. Nevertheless, the dread of infection from those who have been dead more than two centuries is hardly extinct even now. Some time ago, when two of the stone posts around Catherine Mompesson's grave were being replaced, and it was found necessary to dig deep, human remains were brought to light. An instant panic

arose among the workmen lest the bones should be those of Mrs. Mompesson; they were hurriedly covered over, and for some time afterwards Eyam lived in nervous apprehension of an outbreak of plague.

One little-known walk from Eyam will generously reward those who have a long morning or afternoon to spare. Take the Foolow Road from Eyam Hall and continue along the commonplace street to the outskirts of the village. A lane runs up on the right towards the slope of Eyam Edge, and gives us a glimpse of a fine modern house among the trees on the hill-side, while just before us is the shivering wreck of Bradshaw Hall. It belonged to a branch of the family which dwelt in the old hall of the same name near Chapel-en-le-Frith. Only part of one of the wings remains, and its fine Tudor windows have long been blocked with rubble. In the gable is a sculptured stone, but the device is undecipherable, and all around is the litter of an unkempt farm-yard. One would rather see this fragment of what was once a fine mansion razed to the ground and put out of its misery than turned to such humiliating use. Going forward we top the crest of the hill, while Eyam Edge sinks as our road rises parallel with it, losing much of its dignity and all the grace which it borrowed from its trees.

Here, beyond a little house on the right hand, turn down a sandy lane on that side, and continue past a group of gravel pits towards the footpath, which you see slanting up the side of the edge towards a little cluster of roofs. From the summit we command the broad plateau between us and Longstone Edge. It is too bare to be beautiful, and only here and there do welcome little oases of green woods relieve the monotony. Foolow—where there is a fine stone Hall with a beautiful oriel window—is below us, and Wardlow further beyond. There is the green line of Middleton Dale; Tideswell is hidden in its fold; Longstone Edge, curiously different from the aspect it presents from the Ashford or Baslow side, seems to have

shrunk and become flattened. The road which we find at the top of the edge runs straight from Great Hucklow to Grindleford over Sir William Hill; it is the road which we saw fall like a plummet as we climbed to the Fox House Inn.

The few cottages form the hamlet of Bretton. A tiny inn, the Barrel, three centuries old, looks across to Longstone Edge and, when the winter winds are blowing, shivers with the cold. Kists have been found along the edge, with urns now in the Sheffield Museum: and this is much easier to believe than that the road was once known as Bretton Race-course. No one could tell me when last the races were held, but the track—on the wide road—was about a mile and a half round, and it may have been a popular place for the settling of local wagers on points of speed. It has in late years seen the training of many a professional runner exercising his muscles for the Sheffield Handicap. Going down by the side of the Barrel Inn, we pass some ruined homesteads, and soon reach a small farm lying in the fork made by the road and a green lane to its left. The latter affords an excellent view over towards Abney and the broad expanse which is bounded by Shatton Edge, Bradwell Edge and Black Knoll. Out of the valley below us rises a green hill with the road to Abney from the Derwent Valley on the far side of it. To the left, as we face it, is a sloping expanse of well cultivated fields, some of them showing red with the plough. A few homesteads are seen near to Abney, one of them, the Cockey or Cockett Farm, where was born William Newton, the Minstrel of the Peak. But for the most part the ridges mount from solitary fields.

As we descend the green track a genuine surprise awaits us. For we suddenly find ourselves on the upper slope of a secret coomb in the hill-side, running down into a larger ravine that bears the name of Bretton Clough, with a pretty brook, the Bretton, flowing through it. It was to this secluded spot that the people of Eyam drove their cattle in the '45 to conceal them from the expected ravages of the Highlanders. The

path is not one of the easiest to follow, as it zig-zags down the steep turf and leaves us rather mystified amid a confusion of tumbled green hillocks which rejoice the geologist, who comes here gladly as one that has found great treasure. The place is full of wire netting, designed to confine the rabbits in their protected warren. At the foot of the descent, take the right-hand gate of the two and keep the path until a farm comes into sight straight ahead. Go forward to this and then descend towards the brook, following its course down the clough until you join it at a charming spot known as Stoke Ford. Here the Bretton mingles its flood with a little brook that comes down Abney Clough, and together they flow towards Derwent and Trent, under the new name of the Highlow. There is a bridge at Stoke Ford—a rustic affair of saplings—or there are the stepping stones, if you prefer, close by. It is a pretty meeting of the waters in as secluded a valley as one may hope to find. From the ford we climb up to the Abney road, entering it by the side of a fine plantation, and look back for the last time at the winding clough through which we have picked our way. A little further on a great overlapping fold of Eyam Moor draws our eyes across the valley, and then suddenly the red quarries by the side of Surprise View, on the other side of the Derwent, between Hathersage and Grindleford, loom up into unexpected view. We cannot yet see the valley into which we are descending at right angles, but the crests of the opposite ridges indicate how it lies.

All this time we have been steadily approaching a pleasant green hill, pasture to its very summit. The Highlow brook makes a wide sweep away from us to the right; the hill is Highlow itself, whence it derives its name, and the grey homestead is Highlow Hall. It is a stone-built house, facing up the valley towards Abney, and its principal gateway now gives entrance on to the fields. There is another on the roadside, from which the house stands deeply back, the intervening space filled with big stone barns and outbuildings, affording robust suggestion of

broad acres, rich tilth and fat stock. Highlow Hall is among the best preserved of the Derbyshire manors, and was long the home of one of the many branches of the Eyres. Notice the stone dovecote near the road—wisely set well away from the house—and the shapeliness of the gateway, and if it be your privilege to enter the house itself, you will not fail to admire the broad, oaken staircase and the air of solid comfort which pervades the ancient dwelling. From here down to the Derwent we obtain a succession of magnificent views. On our left a wooded gorge opens out towards Offerton Moor—this is the gorge which looks so alluring from Surprise View. Then, as we go forward, we get a noble view of Hathersage and the high ridges above the valley on the Sheffield side, presenting to the eye a long continuous edge ; and an easy descent takes us down into the main road to Grindleford, near where it crosses the Derwent, about a mile out from Hathersage.

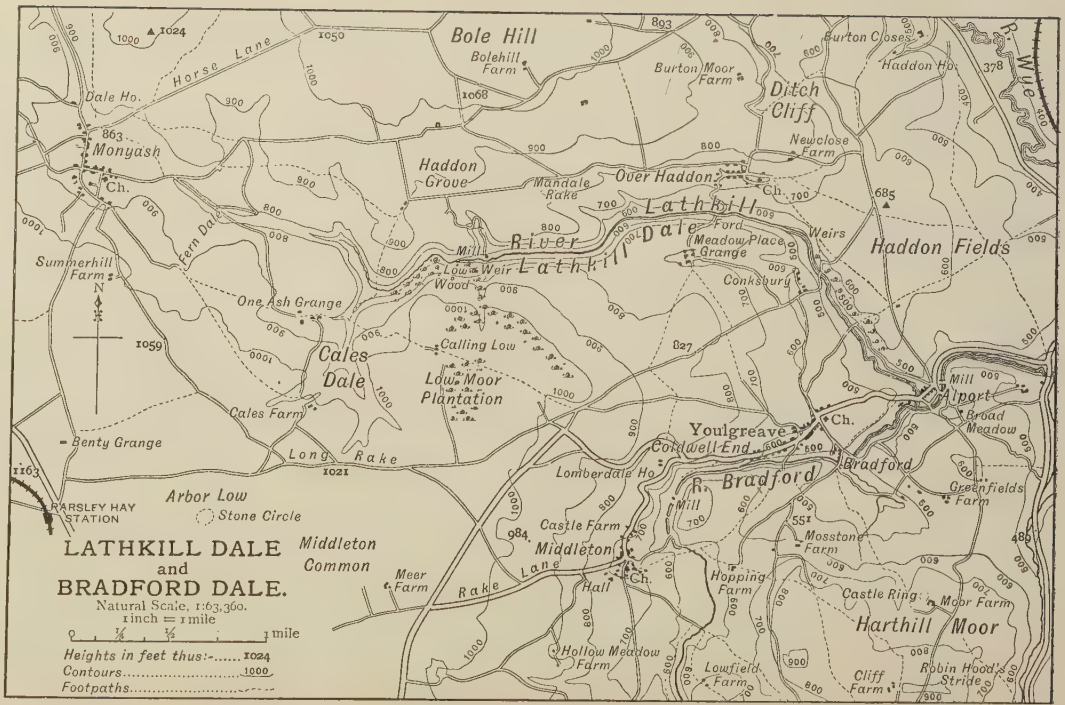
CHAPTER XXV

LATHKILL DALE, BRADFORD DALE, YOULGREAVE, MIDDLETON AND STANTON

Among the fairest of the Derbyshire dales are those of the Lathkill and the Bradford. These twin and trouty streams rise on the eastern slopes of the high ground which drains down into the Wye between Bakewell and Rowsley. Neither, for all its windings, has an independent existence of more than five miles; and mingling their floods at Alport, they flow together for a short three miles till they reach the Wye below Haddon. The choice of approach to them is varied; but it is best, perhaps, to walk down Lathkill Dale from Monyash and up Bradford Dale from Youlgreave to Middleton. The Lathkill springs from a cavernous opening in the rock about two miles from Monyash in a long, rugged limestone defile. The first dale on the right is Cales Dale, up which lies the path to One Ash Grange. Here, in these upper reaches—though the word sounds altogether too big for the stream—we are in a characteristic Derbyshire ravine, hewn out of the hills in some far-off age by rush of water, but of no special attraction to eyes which have already feasted on the best. And here is the Lathkill, flowing gently over sedgy, grassy bottoms, careless of walls and little weirs designed to check its flow. Suddenly, at one of its many bends, the right bank assumes a cloak of trees, reaching to the top of its soaring crest, while on our bank, the left, the trees are but scanty, and great scaurs of rock jut out amid big

patches of broken stone. Here is a sheep-dipping station, and then the Lathkill falls to a lower level in a pretty little cascade over moss-grown rocks, below which is a deep, pellucid pool. At its side is a small tufa quarry—a few square yards of unsightliness which reconciles one to the news that garden rockeries of tufa are going out of fashion. In narrowed channel and with rapid flow the river enters a straight reach of a quarter of a mile, still with a bare hill-side on the left bank and lovely woods upon the right. The channel broadens to some twenty yards, deepening as it approaches a mill, and clear as the famed Bandusian Fount itself. The gaping windows, the broken chimney, the holes in the tiled roof, tell us even at a distance that the mill is a ruin. In what was once a garden nettles grow knee deep; the wheel stands idle, rusting silently in pitiful disuse, though the stream, which would set it spinning merrily, still leaps down the narrow race and splashes noisily on the motionless iron. Futile effort—the place is dead. A glance through the windows shows the empty corn-bins and the shutes —now grimy and black—down which the flour used to pour in white flood. Saddest of all—the industry is dead too. To the left, through an opening in the hills, a bare and uninviting track leads to the uplands. It is the way the corn used to come—it comes no more.

Opposite, a leafy gorge runs up from the stream, with foliage so dense that one can distinguish none of its features save the scaurs of the limestone high above the trees. Beyond the mill is a little plantation which sunders us from the bank, but, as we rejoin it, the Lathkill broadens out into thrice its normal size, a shallow sheet of water by the side of the Low Weir. Jutting out from the opposite bank are the stones of a tiny breakwater, and the shallow steps of the weir itself are covered with moss and almost dry. Only one small runnel was filtering its way through the crevices of the stones, but through the sluices at the sides the water was spirting gaily. The pool looked absolutely still, as I saw it in a beautiful June evening,



LATHKILL DALE and BRADFORD DALE.

Natural Scale, 1:63,360.
1 inch = 1 mile

Heights in feet thus:- 1024
Contours 1000
Footpaths .....

its centre covered with water-plants which had thrust up their brown leaves and tiny white flowers to the surface, and its bed overspread with green sedges, that gave place near the banks to patches of clean gravel. Only the splash of the spirting water and the sharp cries of two waterfowls, calling to one another as they breasted their way through the weeds and left an open lane behind them, broke the delicious stillness of this lovely scene.

As we proceed, our bank of the Lathkill also becomes clothed in a glory of green foliage, and the river path runs beneath the shade of elm and larch, with here and there a rowan and a fir and abundance of hazel and beech. In the more sequestered spots, where the wind has not penetrated, the brown leaves of last year's fall lie untouched; in the more open places they are banked up in great drifts. The wood is not dense; there is no tangle of undergrowth, and, looking up the slope, one can see the sky through the topmost trees and distinguish each separate trunk. For a space we lose the Lathkill—in the reach where the miners have left their ugly trail—but we come to it again by a ruined cottage on a level piece of sward on the right bank. This is a homestead which the last occupant must have quitted with regret, if he had eyes for beauty or ears for the music of the stream, here rippling along over a bed of fine gravel, where not even a minnow can hope for concealment. Two hundred yards further down, a ruined aqueduct leads to a ruined mill Six of the ponderous stone columns by which it crossed the river are still standing, in various stages of unpicturesque decay. They cry shame on their builders, for these are no stately relics of clever brain and honest work, like the arches of the aqueducts in the Campagna—they are mere rubbish, on which one is glad to see Time working his will so quickly.

Beyond the mill a long reach carries us down to ford and foot-bridge and to the path leading up on the left to Over Haddon, perched on the hill above. We are clear now of

woods on our side of the stream, though they still continue on the right bank. Here, too, the Lathkill runs within banked channels, nor clears itself of man's devices and a wilderness of sedge till it is past the foot-bridge and has flowed by the meadow beyond, leaving but just room for the path to squeeze a way between the limestone scaurs and the water, which broadens out to a width of forty yards. A boathouse is seen under the woods of the opposite bank, but the boats are for fishing rather than rowing in a stream where the water-plants grow so free. Then come a few yards where the rocks overhang the path, and below is a weir of five curving steps with a black pool beneath, where the trout come up to play as though they enjoyed the rush of the falling stream. And who doubts their enjoyment or delight in their arrowy journeyings, knowing the river as they do, far better than we clumsily-moving creatures can ever hope to know it? The Lathkill is one of the most renowned of English trout streams and has been so since Cotton's day. Does not Piscator say that the Lathkin—for so he spelt it—is, "by many degrees, the purest and most transparent stream that I ever yet saw, either at home or abroad, and breeds, it is said, the reddest and the best Trouts in England." "Too small to be reputed rivers," he adds, the Lathkill and the Bradford are "no better than great springs." It is for the fisherman's sake that these waters are so carefully held up by the succession of weirs and deep pools which look so picturesque and charming all the way from Over Haddon to Conksbury Bridge, and for the next mile and a half down to Alport. But the reaches are unequally tended; some are so choked and overgrown with weeds and rushes that no stream is visible.

I saw one of the great pools drained off a few days later, till the tufa bed—congenial soil for all manner of strange plants—lay exposed in mid-stream, with muddy channels on either side of it in which a wader would sink to his waist. They had driven the fish down the shrinking stream into a shallow pool and then lifted them out into two great zinc washing-pails, each

of which, when full of fish and water, taxed the strength of two men to carry. Hundreds of trout lay in the pails, in a huddled mass, glad to be counted and emptied out into one of the lower pools. But the biggest had been placed apart. These reposed in a close-meshed net in the river bed, covered over with moss to keep the sun from scorching them, and waiting, poor things, till their necks should be broken and they should fulfil their destined end of providing "a dish of trout" for an appreciative palate. Such is the penalty that big trout pay when they take to eating their smaller kith and kin!

Conksbury Bridge has a fascination of its own. As we approach it by the river path it looks a solid wall built across the stream; nor, until we are close upon it, do we distinguish the low arches through which the river flows. It looks an ancient bridge: its very name suggests remote antiquity. And old it is, standing on the old high-road from Bakewell to the Newhaven Inn and Ashbourne. Once there were cottages on the other side—they have been swept away—but the farmhouse near by, Meadow Place Grange, was long a place of some account, and had its own private chapel. At the bridge the path crosses to the right bank; on the left a delightful wood rises from a narrow strip of green sward. Then, in a few hundred yards, we reach a little arched bridge with the daintiest of pretty weirs by its side, and a stone's-throw away under the trees may be seen the Fishing House of the Marquis of Granby, a much less substantial building than the Fishing House on the Dove. The foot-path which mounts through the wood leads straight over Haddon Fields to the Wye at Haddon Hall, and was the direct track from Haddon to Youlgreave. Our way, however, lies not over the bridge but up to the right, past the keeper's lodge, and out into the lane, which leads into the high-road, and so on to Youlgreave.

Over Haddon, which lay on the hill above us a mile before we reached Conksbury Bridge, is a pretty village. This was the home of Martha Taylor, the fasting girl, the *Mirabile Pecci*,

as one writer called her, "the Derbyshire Non-such," as she was styled by another. Two rare pamphlets relating to her case may be seen by the curious at the British Museum, one a quasi-scientific document written by Joseph Reynolds, of King's Norton, in 1669 and "humbly offered to the Royall Society"; the other, composed in the same year by "H. A." and designed for religious edification. The facts are these. In 1667 an Over Haddon girl, named Martha Taylor, "born of mean parentage" and about eighteen years of age, began to abstain from solid foods. She had been ailing for eight years, ever since a neighbour had struck her a blow—whether in jest or anger—in the small of the back. This had led to lameness and spinal trouble, and she had taken to her bed in 1662, lying by the fire-side in the lower room of the house. She gradually wasted away, and from Dec. 22, 1667, onwards eat nothing solid. Reynolds says that all the sustenance she had was "now and then a few drops of the syrup of stewed prunes, of water and sugar, or the juice of a roasted raisin." Her lips, too, were occasionally moistened with a feather dipped in sugar and water. Once she continued five weeks without sleep, but "her countenance remained fresh and lively, and her voice clear and audible," and she was "free in discourse." She had learned to read and "attained some knowledge in sacred mysteries," but "pretended to nothing of enthusiasm." Apparently, the case was genuine enough, for she was carefully watched by physicians, surgeons and other persons "for at least a fortnight together." These were appointed by the Earl of Devonshire, who took great interest in the girl. For thirteen months she had lived in this way, in full possession of her faculties, but wasted to an incredible degree. The last published record of her fast is of the date March 30th, 1669, and, according to the register, she was buried on June 12th, 1684. Either the latter date is wrong, or the girl recovered. It is impossible to believe that she existed in such a deplorable condition for seventeen years.

Youlgreave is an attractive village with a handsome church

at its eastern end, whose noble tower dates from the fifteenth century and is one of the finest of its kind in Derbyshire. The interior has been well restored and contains a number of interesting things—a fine Burne-Jones window in the chancel ; a unique round sandstone font, set on pillars, with a projecting stoup at the side ; an exquisite little alabaster table tomb, four feet long, with a miniature effigy of Sir Thomas Cokayne, of Harthill ; a quaint little figure of a palmer with wallet and staff ; and monuments of the Gilberts of Alport, the ubiquitous Eyres, the Thornhills of Stanton, and other families which have long vanished from the district. In the parish register are two entries of more than usual interest under the dates 1614 and 1615. These were the years of the great snow and drought, both of extraordinary duration and intensity. The story cannot be better told than in the clerk's own words and in his own curious spelling. He says :—

"This year, 1614-15, January 16, began the greatest snow which ever fell uppon the Earth within man's memorye. It covered the Earth fyve quarters deap uppon the playne (*i.e.* 45 inches). And for heapes, or drifts of snow, they were very deap so that passengers, both horse and foot, passed over gates, hedges and walles. It fell at ten severall tymes, and the last was the greatest, to the great admiration and feare of all the land, for it came from the foure pts of the worls so that all c'ntryes were full, yea the south p'te as well as these mountaynes. It continued by daily encreasing until the 12th day of March (without the sight of any earth, eyther uppon hilles or valleys), uppon wch daye, being the Lorde's day, it began to decrease : and so by little and little consumed and wasted away, till the eight and twentieth day of May, for then all the heapes or drifts of snow were consumed, except one uppon Kinderscout, wch lay till Witsun week. Hyndrances and losses in this peake c'ntry by the snow afore abovesayd. (1) It hindered the seedtyme. (2) It consumed much fodder. (3) And many wanted fewell, otherwise few were smothered in the fall, or drowned in the passage : in regard the floods of water were not great though many. The name of our Lorde be praysed. There fell also ten lesse snows in Aprill, some a foote deep, some lesse, but none continued long. Uppon May day in the morning, instead of fetching in flowers, the youthes brought in flakes of snow which lay above a foot deep uppon the moores and mountaynes.

The simple directness of this narrative bears comparison even with Blackmore's description in *Lorna Doone* of the great snow in Devonshire half a century later. As regards the drought, the Youlgreave clerk did not enter into so many particulars. But he tells us that no rain fell upon the earth from the 25th day of March till the 2nd day of May, and then there was but one shower. Only two more fell between then and the 4th day of August, so that the greater part of the land was entirely burnt up.

We descend the hill past Youlgreave churchyard to where the Bradford is spanned by road-bridge and foot-bridge, the latter with stone supports no more than three feet high. Here we turn rightwards up the left bank, below the terraced gardens of the cottages on the hill-side, and cross at the end of the first reach. The river is no more than a bubbling brook, which would speedily run itself dry were it not restrained by the weirs that transform whole reaches of this gracious stream into still pools, even more crystal clear than those of the Lathkill. As you walk along the grassy track you can see the trout busy on their errands amid the brown water-weeds, which display below only their lean, bare stalks and grope their way to the surface ere they put out a leaf. These are the forests of the trout, and through them the fish go darting with unerring aim, though they travel quick as a flash of light. Turning with the stream round the spur of a little hill, we see a large mill before us—empty, of course. Through the barred doors one can hear the disconsolate drip of the water on the wheel, and the mill-race running idly, doing no work. In the dam above only the waterfowl were stirring and a big brown rat, which came swimming across with his muzzle high out of the water. Suddenly his beady eyes met mine. He stopped instantly, hesitated for a fraction of a second, then dived like a stone. I saw him no more; though for this, perhaps, my town eyes were at fault. Just one more twist and our bonny dale comes to an end with stately trees on either bank. We have a

glimpse of the bare hill-side beyond, and note the big limestone rock with the ash tree by its side, at the corner beyond where the path crosses the bridge. A gallant Cavalier there received his death wound. One regrets that Bradford Dale ceases so soon. It is but a mile long, but for peaceful loveliness and sheer prettiness nothing in Derbyshire excels it. So we pass reluctantly over the bridge towards the stone building with ugly roof of corrugated iron, whence issues the throbbing sound of the water turbine which supplies Middleton with water, and then up the leafy dell that leads to the village. This lane is out of the sun's eye and cool as a shady arbour, for steep cliffs protect it, cliffs where the jackdaws are chattering, and where the trees thrust out long roots which cling in frenzied contortion to the rocks to compensate for lack of soil.

In the pretty village of Middleton, the most interesting spot is the mound which marks the site of the old embattled house where the Fullwoods dwelt. The most famous of his line was Sir Christopher, who enlisted more than a thousand miners for the King in the Civil War, and lost his life in that unhappy struggle. Tradition says that he was surprised at Middleton by a party of Parliamentarians, emissaries of Sir John Gell, of Hopton, and took refuge behind the rock which we saw in the dale below, where he was mortally wounded. He died at Caulton, in Staffordshire, on Nov. 16th, 1643, and his loss was a severe blow to the Royalist cause in Derbyshire. The house was dismantled and its stones used in the building of the Castle Farm, in whose fields the mounds lie—the first field on the right hand on the road to Youlgreave. A mile out of Middleton, at a bend of the same road, we come to Lomberdale House, commanding a fine view down Bradford Dale. This was the residence of William Bateman, the well-known Derbyshire archæologist, an enthusiastic barrow-digger and collector of antiquities, whose museum, long located in this house, is now at Sheffield and has been unhappily lost to Derbyshire. His record of his explorations is still a standard work of

Derbyshire archæology. Just beyond Lomberdale House a field on the left hand bears the name of Costal—said to be a corruption of "cold steel," but the derivation looks exceedingly suspicious. Another mile and we are in Youlgreave again, where we pass, as we enter the village, a pretty old house by the roadside and a barbarously ugly conduit in the market place, enclosed with rails, and bearing the date 1829.

From Youlgreave it is a pleasant short excursion to visit the curious rocks on Harthill Moor, which takes its name—it used frequently to be spelt Hartle—from an old manor, now a farmhouse, about half a mile from Alport. This was the ancient home of a local branch of the Cokaynes. The way lies down to the Bradford, where one crosses the stream, bears to the right hand and in a few yards takes a foot-path on the left. This slants across the fields and soon begins to rise to the high ground, passing through an attractive wood, and out by the side of a farm into the road from Alport to Elton. A continuing path across the road brings us to the tumbled mass of rocks known as Robin Hood's Stride, so-called from the two projecting pillars at either end, eighteen feet high and twenty-two yards apart. Graned Tor was another name for this striking pile of rocks, which some of the older archæologists fondly believed to be a Druidical monument, and it was also known as Mock Beggars Hall from its resemblance at a distance to a large mansion. The rocks stand well on an eminence above the road, but they are not to be compared with the Black Rocks at Cromford. Cratcliff or Carcliff Tor, another imposing mass of the same ridge, lies near by on our left hand; a hermit's cave may be seen at its foot, with a crucifix roughly carved out of the rock. Near at hand also are the Rowtor, Router, or Roo Tor Rocks, surmounted by the Needle. The best view of these various groups is to be obtained from the bend of the road in the hill in front of us which leads up to Winster. We shall visit Winster, however, later on; here we turn back down the road, and in two miles take the by-road to the right that leads

to Stanton-in-the-Peak. A curious old house, with most of its windows blocked up, attracts notice as we enter the village ; the church is modern and undistinguished, and fenced about with a high wall. Behind it spreads the deer-park surrounding Stanton Hall, which has been for many generations the home of the Thornhills. Stanton, pleasantly situated in woods, is the head-quarters of a great quarrying industry located on the moors at the back overlooking Darley Dale. Our road bears leftward

The Peacock Inn, Rowsley.

beyond the church and keeping well up on the high ground as it turns to the north-east, soon gives us a series of beautiful views over the valley of the Wye towards Bakewell. At the point commanding the finest prospect, a semi-circular recess has been built with stone flooring and seat. From here we may look down on the grey walls of Haddon, bowered in trees, above the sinuous Wye. Below us, too, are the pastures of Nether Haddon and Haddon Fields, carrying the eye on to the pretty town of Bakewell, with Longstone Edge rising up in the background to bound the horizon. Everywhere green woods, green fields and

delightful streams. We begin to descend, still keeping the view with us, till our road receives lanes from right and left. Then, still descending, we pass to the right of Peak Tor or Pillow Hill, one of the most shapely little hills in Derbyshire, whose velvety sides are dotted with fine trees. This shuts out our prospect, but a new view opens to the right over Darley Dale towards Matlock, and, when we have flanked Peak Tor, we stand on a ridge that for a little way commands the double view over Wye and Derwent. Dropping down at the back of the hill, by a road where the slippered wheels of the stone-waggons have dug great trenches in the surface, we are on the level once more, and soon cross the Wye, which joins the Derwent a stone's-throw away through the fields. John Gisborne has charmingly described the scene :—

> " The tortuous Wye
> Appears. Mark how reluctant he withdraws !
> How he turns back in many a lingering curve,
> As if enamoured of the groves and towers
> He lately passed : as if well pleased to paint
> On his effulgent mirrors moving slow,
> A double picture of the enchanting scene,
> The vale's reflected charms. And who, I ask,
> Of all that ever roamed these banks or lawns,
> Can wonder ? Who that hither bends his step
> What time her stars the primrose first expands
> Gemming yon hawthorn's root : or July suns,
> Pride of the ardent year, invite the trout
> With oft-repeated circles to disturb
> The glassy smoothness of their lucid haunts ?
> Or when, as now, autumnal visions glare,
> Or e'en when winter's snow, like flowers, enwreathes
> The pinnacles of Haddon ; who can hide
> ' The forms of beauty smiling at his heart,'
> Can wonder at the pausing tide of Wye ? "

Then we enter the village of Rowsley—pleasant enough in its older part, with an inn—the Peacock—that dates back to the time of the Commonwealth, and an ancient bridge over the Derwent,

"From whence
Rowsley! thine arches grey are seen, and sure
More graceful arches never yet beheld
Their circles finished in a glassy flood."

Over the bridge we come to the railway and to the Rowsley of the railway workers, ugliness in rows of uniform pattern. If your way, however, be on foot to Edensor or Baslow, avoid the dusty road by taking a foot-path through a gate from the side of the Rowsley Post Office, and continue through the fields on the right bank of the Derwent, till you issue by the farm near the bridge on the border of Chatsworth Park.

Rowsley Bridge.

CHAPTER XXVI

DARLEY DALE AND THE MATLOCKS

Darley Dale is green and spacious. It extends from Rowsley, at its northern, to Matlock at its southern extremity, some five to six miles long in a straight line, and is at its broadest mid-way, where Two Dales branches off on its eastern side and Wensley on its western. At the Rowsley end the hills seem to enfold the valley as though to deny all outlet, though here the Wye and Derwent meet, and their respective valleys converge. So, too, at Matlock, the hill of Riber lies straight across the broad mouth of the valley, and the Derwent has to force a passage to the right through a deep, romantic gorge. Darley Dale is seen at its best from the hill-tops, as we shall see it from Stanton Stand and from the summit of Masson. From Beeley to Two Dales one wood succeeds another; then comes a wide break, and two minor dales run up to the moors at the back. One of these is Hall Dale; the other is the gorge

of the Sydnope brook with Sydnope Hall at its upper extremity, once the home of Sir Francis Darwin. Eighty years ago a busy flax mill on the Sydnope, belonging to a family named Dakeyne, or Dakyns, was worked by an elaborate and ingenious contrivance designed to supersede the old water-wheels. These Dakeynes, a branch of the family at Stubbing Edge, near Ashover, bore the curious motto, "Strike, Dakeyne, the devil is in the hemp."

Mid-way down the dale the road to Winster rises through Wensley, at the foot of which is Oaker Hill, a pretty little green hill of irregular outline, with a few cottages lying snugly on its sides, which would be quite undistinguished save for the happy circumstance that Wordsworth dedicated a sonnet to it. When the poet visited Darley Dale, he was told how two brothers had once parted on its summit. The one was quitting his native home to push his fortunes elsewhere; the other had elected to remain. On the top of Oaker they said farewell, and met no more.

> "'Tis said that to the brow of yon fair hill
> Two brothers clomb; and turning face from face,
> Nor one look more exchanging, grief to still
> Or feed, each planted on that lofty place
> A chosen tree. Then, eager to fulfil
> Their courses, like two new-born rivers, they
> In opposite directions urged their way
> Down from the far-seen mount. No blast might kill
> Or blight that fond memorial. The trees grew
> And now entwine their arms; but ne'er again
> Embraced those brothers upon earth's wide plain,
> Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew
> Until their spirits mingled in the sea
> That to itself takes all—Eternity."

One of the twin sycamores died, and for many years the survivor stood solitary on the summit. It now has a companion planted in honour of the King's Coronation. Oaker Hill might surely have been left to the poet. It is said that the actual,

planter of the two sycamores was a man, named Shore, who wished his own coffin to be made from their wood.

Stancliffe Hall, for many years one of the show places of Darley Dale, is now a school. It adjoins the most pitiless quarry in the dale, where the hill-side has been attacked so ruthlessly that it looks as though what remains would fall by its own weight. From this famous quarry came the stone of which St. George's Hall, Liverpool, was built, and its lions, weighing six tons each, were fashioned here. It is said that Sir Joseph Whitworth, who bought the old Stancliffe Hall estate very cheaply, more than recouped himself by his profits on the sale of this stone. Then he closed the works, built himself a mansion and lavished money upon the grounds and flower gardens which, in the opinion of many, more than rivalled those of Chatsworth. When Sir Joseph and Lady Whitworth died the big hall came into the market, but found no purchaser and long stood empty. The quarries were re-opened; the work of destruction began anew, and the hill is in process of being torn away block by block. Sir Joseph Whitworth's memory, however, will be kept green in Darley Dale as long as the Institute stands, which bears his name, and the Hospital, which was the gift of his wife. Elsewhere he is associated with guns and engines of destruction; here in Darley Dale with flowers and gardens and generous beneficence.

But the finest thing in Darley Dale is the marvellous old yew tree in the churchyard of Church Town, a few minutes' walk from Darley Dale Station. A church of St. Helen has stood here for many centuries, as the stone coffins and sculptured lids now set up in the porch bear witness. Within, the fabric shows a medley of styles, and the monuments go back to a certain John de Darley early in the fourteenth century. The most interesting are the effigy slabs of the Rollesley family of the middle of the sixteenth century, whose name survives in Rowsley. Here, too, is Burne Jones' *Song of Solomon* window, in memory of one Raphael Gillman, who died in 1860 at the

Church and Yew tree, Darley Dale.

age of ninety. It consists of twelve blazing panels, utterly unlike the ordinary pallid designs for church windows. The colours are vivid; the contrasts sharp; the scenes and the figures alike

bizarre. The window is a picture puzzle, challenging attention and demanding an answer, and must be a great rival to the preacher during sermon time. The yew stands opposite the south porch, surrounded—most wisely, considering the vandals with pocket knives who infest the roads—with spiked iron railings. It is not as tall in the bole as many ancient yews, for it divides almost immediately into two main trunks, and then sub-divides again into scores of branches of varying thickness. Many of these were lopped off about 1820. Whether this was a necessary operation or not I do not know, but Rhodes, in recording it, uses the word "despoiled," and the destruction was probably sanctioned by the rector to avoid the expense of propping up the flowing branches. But the yew, which is thirty-three feet in girth four feet from the ground, is still hale and hearty and gives no sign of failing strength. As to its age the authorities differ widely. Some—including Dr. Cox, who has written with great feeling on this venerable tree—boldly assign to it an age of two thousand years; others deny it more than six or seven hundred. Let the scientists decide their quarrel!

Derbyshire is rich in yew trees. There are fine specimens at Doveridge, at Sudbury and at Beeley, but the Darley yew is the noblest example of all. It has even claims to be considered the finest in the British Isles, regard being paid to age and size and condition. Others ranking high are the Crowhurst yew in Surrey; the Tisbury yew in Wiltshire; the forest of yews at Cherkley Court, near Leatherhead; the yews of Brecon and those of Fountains Abbey, under whose branches, according to the legend, the masons lived while they built their poem in stone. In Evelyn's time a giant yew stood at Brabourne, in Kent, whose girth was only one inch short of fifty-nine feet, and Prebendary Gilpin speaks of a yew at Fotheringal, near Taymouth in Scotland, which was fifty-six feet and a half in circumference. Compared with these the girth of the Darley yew seems insignificant, but it gives no added charm to me that a yew should be hollow, as at Crowhurst, where they have nailed

a rough wooden door to the poor old ruin and turned it into a tool-house. The Darley yew is not a hollow shell, but a firm, solid tree, which should withstand many a century more of winter storm.

Why were yews planted in churchyards? We must renounce, it seems, among many other pleasant fictions of the past, the old idea that the churchyard yew was intended to supply the parish with wood for the making of bows. Patriotic poets have sung of the bow which was made in England, of "the yew wood, the true wood," grown on English soil. Alas, the facts do not fit the theory! The English yew did not make specially good bows. The best came from abroad, and the English archers at Crécy, maybe, shot with foreign-grown weapons. The best foreign yew fetched in the English market three times the price of the native product, and the poets, therefore, will be well advised in future to stick to the English oak. Yews probably owe their presence in churchyards to their dark funereal aspect, though by a strange contradiction their longevity and their perpetual green also make them a meet symbol of immortality. Whatever its symbolical meaning, however, an ancient church yew has the faculty of arousing sentiment even in the most unlikely breasts and stirs deeper feelings than oak or elm. Mute but pathetic evidence of this may be seen in the case of the Darley Dale yew. On all sides, beneath its branches, the ground is covered thick with gravestones, set so close that the graves encroach one upon the other. Evidently, from time immemorial the people of Darley Dale have been desirous of sleeping their last sleep beneath its shade. "Let me be buried under the old yew," must have been the last request of many a dying dalesman, till the tree has become almost as sacred in its associations as the church itself.

> "Old warder of these buried bones
> And answering now my random stroke
> With fruitful cloud and living smoke;
> Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest towards the dreamless head,
In thee too comes the golden hour,
When flower is feeling after flower."

No poet ever observed tree life more closely than Tennyson. If you strike with a stick the branch of a yew tree when it is in bloom in the spring, the pollen from the male yellow flowers will fall in a golden shower upon the female blossoms, and the process of fertilisation will be accomplished.

Darley Dale has had its poet—a minor one, it is true, yet still a poet. John Gisborne, a brother of Thomas Gisborne, the Prebendary of Durham and the better known author of *Walks in a Forest*, lived in the dale during the first quarter of the nineteenth century and dedicated to his brother a little volume of poems, entitled *Reflections*, which was published in 1833. He too, was a strong Evangelical—he was known, indeed, as "The Man of Prayer"—and his pietistic tendencies obtrude themselves in his reflections on the church and the yew tree. He says:—

"Defaced and much bereaved
Of all thine outward ornament, 'tis well
O sacred edifice, that Truth presides
Within thy court, that Evangelic Day
Diffuses heavenly radiance on thy walls
And lights the sinner to a Throne of Grace.
Nor shall thy reverend yew, the sire who holds
His sceptre verdant through the changeful year,
Unnoticed stand. He has beheld, like thee,
Thousands entombed within his shadow, heard
For ages past the sobs, the heart-fetched groans
Of parting anguish ere the grave was closed,
And drank the mourner's tears. Yea, he has felt,
Like thee, the war of elements; like thee,
Escaped the fury of that deadlier strife
Which mortals sometimes urge, sparing nor sex,
Nor age, nor science, nor the works of art,
Nor GOD'S high altar."

Wordsworth complimented Gisborne on his verses, but he was diffident and shy, and the main bent of his life was towards

religion. He left Darley Dale about 1835 and migrated to Blackpool, then a tiny hamlet on the Lancashire coast, where he ended his days.

The approach to Matlock along the main road through Darley Dale is most disappointing. As road, river, and railway draw together, we reach the commonplace outskirts of the town, spoilt by aggressive limekilns, quarries, and all the paraphernalia of industry in its ugliest form. When we emerge we are close to Matlock Bridge, an ancient structure which, as I saw it, was in the throes of being widened. Matlock Bank stretches away up the steep hill side to the left hand—a prosperous-looking place of little interest, unless your tastes lie in the direction of hydropathy and the buildings where it is cultivated. Fifty or sixty years ago Matlock Bank was a bare expanse with few houses. But our way lies along the Derwent side. Crossing the bridge, we follow the main road—now a street of commonplace shops—till we soon pass under the railway and enter upon one of the most beautiful river reaches of Derbyshire. We do so with high expectation. The fame of Matlock's beauty has gone forth to the uttermost parts of the earth. For a whole century writer after writer has assured us that the charms of romantic Matlock are irresistible; that its combination of river, rocks, and woods is matchless. Let us quote Ruskin's glowing eulogy:—

"Learned traveller, gentle and simple—but above all, English *Paterfamilias*—think of what this little piece of mid-England has brought into so narrow compass of all that should be most precious to you. In its very minuteness it is the most educational of all the districts of beautiful landscape known to me. The vast masses, the luxurious colouring, the mingled associations of great mountain scenery, amaze, excite, overwhelm, or exhaust—but too seldom teach; the mind cannot choose where to begin. But Derbyshire is a lovely child's alphabet; an alluring first lesson in all that is admirable; and powerful chiefly in the way it engages and fixes the attention. On its miniature cliffs a dark ivy leaf detaches itself as an object of importance; you distinguish with interest the species of mosses on the top; you count, like many falling diamonds, the magical drops of its petrifying wells; the cluster of violets in the shade

is an Armida's garden to you—and the grace of it all!—and the suddenness of its enchanted changes, the terrorless grotesque—grotesque *par excellence*. It was a meadow a minute ago, now it is a cliff, and in an instant a cave—and here was a brooklet, and now it is a whisper underground. Turn but the corner of the path, and it is a little green lake of incredible crystal; and if the trout in it lifted up their heads and talked to you, you would be no more surprised than if it was in the Arabian Nights."

Many years have passed since Ruskin penned that eloquent passage; if he could revisit the well-loved scene, would he suffer the written word to stand? I think that those who best know Ruskin's work and feel qualified to speak, however diffidently, in his name, will agree that if he could walk or drive from Matlock Bridge to Matlock Bath, and from Matlock Bath to Cromford, the old man's indignation would rise at every step till, by the time he reached the turn of the road at Cromford, he would be bubbling over with fury and rage and would scarify those who so complacently wrest his generous praise to the ignoble uses of advertisement. Ruskin would not mince his words; and making no allowance for delicate susceptibilities, he would tell the Matlock people in scorching words that they have suffered their beautiful country to become vulgarised. Let the truth be told for once! Nature has done for favoured Matlock all she can; she has lavished upon her her very choicest treasures; she has given her a delightful river which is a joy to the eye and to the ear, majestic cliffs which rise in stately beauty, living woods which wave their lovely plumes over rock and stream. She has formed these gracious gifts into the most exquisite combinations, as though she had said to herself, "I will make in Matlock my choicest abode that men may there see my perfect handiwork." And in return for these bounties, what have the guardians of the dale done for Nature? They have deliberately degraded Matlock Bath into a tripper's Paradise, and encouraged the railway companies to let loose daily in the summer-time among its sylvan beauties a horde of callous rowdies, who envy Attila his destructive

secret, whereby the grass never grew again where once his foot had been planted. The debasing influence of the day tripper is everywhere visible in Matlock. His trail is unmistakable. His litter is omnipresent. And even when no long trains are standing empty in the sidings waiting for the hour of return, the mark of the tripper is daubed all over Matlock. He has tastes which must be catered for—the ugly phrase is here appropriate. The shops deck themselves out with vulgarities and banalities to please their patron. His eye is supposed to be dim; therefore, nothing but what is gaudy will attract him. His ear is so accustomed to the roar of machinery and the din of streets that there must be a bawling salesman on the pavement to shout crude invitations to buy. It is these shops, these refreshment bars, these permanent preparations for the coming of the tripper, which ruin a place, and, once begun, the descent to Avernus becomes a veritable glissade.

It is very well for the local authorities to quote with complacence the alluring periods of Ruskin, and, seizing upon them as a gigantic free advertisement, to invite people to Matlock as to an earthly Paradise. Matlock and Matlock Bath are steadily being ruined, not alone in the eyes of the fastidious, who shrink from crowds—unless they are fashionable crowds—as from the plague, but in the eyes of people of ordinary good taste who hate rowdiness and vulgarity.

The proof lies all about us as we enter the dale which leads to Matlock Bath. The river flows on our left hand; Matlock proper is behind us; the High Tor rises just ahead. The first thing we pass is a large, unsightly quarry on the right; then we reach the Boat House Hotel, once one of the fashionable houses of the dale. Next succeeds a finely-wooded curve, but the houses are mean and poor, and blatant advertisements abound on every hand. Suspension bridges span the river, but you must pay to pass through the turnstiles, and big boards descant on the beauties of the walks up to the Tor and the price of admission. The High Tor is magnificent, rising up sheer from

the Derwent to the height of six hundred feet, beautifully wooded on its lower part, but with the limestone rock showing grey and bare for more than half its height. Its broad irregular ridge, sloping sharply down towards Matlock Bath, nobly dominates the dale through which the Derwent flows amid trees at its base. Just here, for a few yards, Matlock Dale is unspoilt, but we no sooner pass round the bend than we are saluted by the brick chimney of some paint works, while just at hand is a manufactory of ginger beer, and a little way beyond is the familiar reek of gasworks. A few well-kept houses, with bright flower gardens, partially redeem the right-hand side of the road, but for the most part the dwellings are in keeping with the gasworks, not with the Tor. Arrived at the dingy approach to the railway station at Matlock Bath, we cease to be offended, for we have grown accustomed to outrage.

Here, however, where the road and river turn sharply at right angles, we hope for better things as the dale makes a new start. This is the modern part of Matlock Bath, with a strip of public garden between us and the Derwent. On the further bank promenade grounds have been laid out, approached by a light suspension bridge. The main street is a street of shops, and the evidence of the day tripper becomes cumulative and overwhelming. Every shop, all down this short reach of the river, seems either a cheap eating-house or a cheap spar-shop, where the stranger may purchase a memento of his happy day, and obtain a bewildering choice of perfectly useless and futile ornaments. Again the situation is charming; but, what with the bawling of the drivers of brakes and waggonettes, the attentions of the pushing salesmen, and the tawdriness and vulgarity of their wares, one is glad to get away and make still a new essay around the next bend, where the hill rises in a magnificent sweep on the right hand, while on the left is the most exquisite gorge of the Derwent. We are now in the old part of Matlock Bath—the South Parade—from which narrow winding ways run up to the residential houses on the lower

High Tor, Matlock

slopes of the Heights of Abraham, themselves overtopped by the wooded crest of Masson. It is a glorious site for an inland watering place, but the main road is frankly detestable. The eating-house, the tea-room, the common toy- and spar-shop, the bars of the frequent hotels dominate the street. Such desecration—for desecration it is—is pitiful. At every step you are adjured to go and see some miraculous cavern, or dropping well, or giant stalactite, each the greatest marvel and wonder of the Peak, and the catch penny or catch three-penny touting boards at last get upon the nerves. Further on I saw corrugated iron refreshment bars on the main road, as though there were any danger of the poor tripper leaving with thirst unquenched, and for his amusement a huge switch-back railway has been erected on the river bank. The bank here is narrow, with just room for a strip of bright green lawn, yet on it has been set this wooden monstrosity! When trade is brisk, you may hear every few minutes shrill, hysterical laughter and cries of uncontrolled joy, blended with the rush and rattle of strident wheels. It is a wanton outrage to one of the fairest scenes in England.

Happily, there are signs that the people of Matlock Bath are seeing the folly of so short-sighted a policy, and schemes of considerable magnitude are on foot for the improvement of the district. It is proposed to acquire gradually the entire river bank, which unfortunately belongs to a large number of small owners, each of whom has hitherto done that which he liked with his own. The Fishpond stables are to be cleared away under this scheme, and on their site and an adjoining plot it is proposed to build a Pump Room and Baths on the Buxton and Harrogate model. The thermal water from the Grotto Spring in the grounds of the Royal Hotel (the Old Bath) would thus be properly utilised, half the flow of water—which is four hundred thousand gallons a day—being guaranteed in perpetuity to the town. If that were done and stringent control were exercised over the enterprise of individual ratepayers, and the railway companies were discouraged from flooding the place

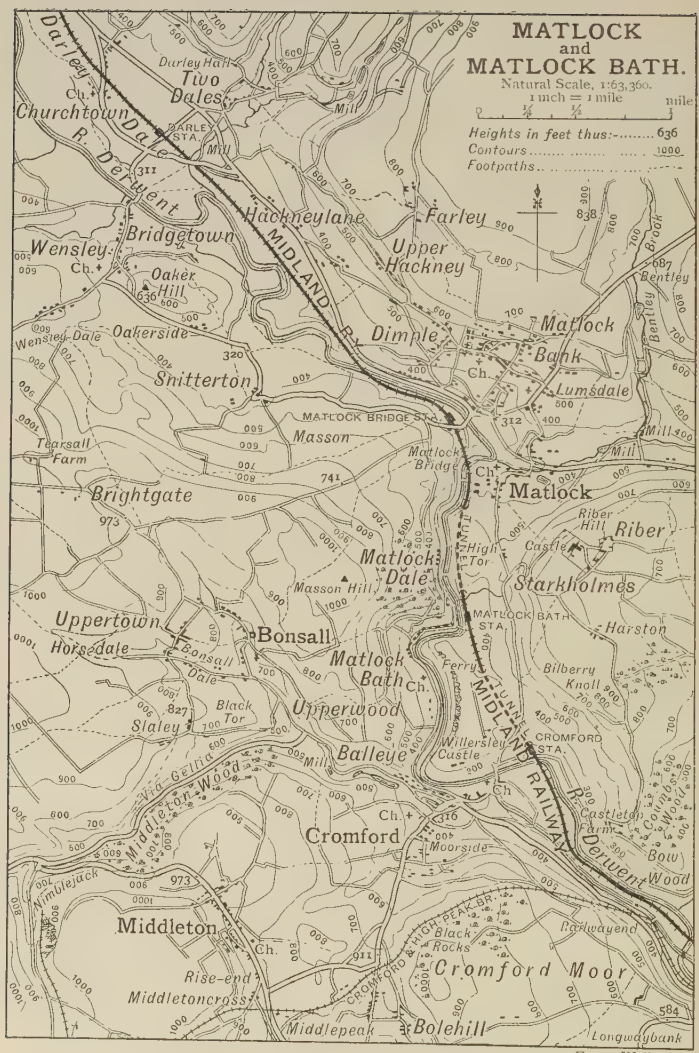
every summer day with trippers, Matlock Bath might hope to win back some of her vanished prestige.

No more lovely natural situation can be conceived. The river runs straight for a short stretch, its left bank a high limestone cliff, beautifully wooded, with paths—Lovers' Walks—winding upwards among the trees. The right bank is a sloping hillside, stretching down from Masson, also delightfully wooded and with houses scattered in pleasing irregularity. We shall return and climb the hill later on; at present let us continue along the main road past the church and the weir to the great brick cotton mills with their stone quoins and windows, and their tall chimney. Then Derwent makes another of his violent turns, and we pass at the corner an unexpected chapel—uglier even than the mill—which bears the date of 1777, and the name of the donor, one Lady Glenorchy, who endowed this place of worship and the parsonage at its side. Lady Glenorchy, a typical evangelical *réligieuse* of the eighteenth century, was the wife of Viscount Glenorchy, eldest son of the Earl of Breadalbane. At the age of twenty-three she became a religious fanatic. Renouncing all the frivolities of fashionable life, she suddenly devoted her whole life to preaching the doctrine of Saving Grace. Her sincerity was beyond question, for she gave up her entire fortune to the training of young ministers and the building of chapels. Moreover, she not only built, but endowed them—doubtless the main reason of their survival. The principal one is at Edinburgh, where her ladyship lies buried. Early in the nineteenth century Dr. T. S. Jones, the pastor of this Edinburgh chapel, wrote a life of his patroness, with selections from her letters and diary, which show what exquisite comfort Lady Glenorchy derived from subscribing herself "the chief of sinners." The only passage, however, to interest us is that which tells how her ladyship came to be associated with Matlock. One Saturday, while she was driving through the village on her way south, her carriage broke down, and this necessitated her remaining over the Sunday. "On making enquiries," says

Dr. Jones, "as she usually did wherever she went, concerning the state of religion in Matlock, and finding it very low, she was induced to make proposals for purchasing a small, but neat house, originally built for the residence of the managing partner of a cotton mill, and which had a chapel adjoining, capable of containing 300 persons. This purchase she finally accomplished. The chapel remains, and much good has been and still continues to be done by the preaching of the Gospel in this place." Lady Glenorchy bought the house and chapel—they had been built in 1777 by Sir Richard Arkwright for his partner Mr. Need of Nottingham in 1785, and it was her intention to settle down in Matlock for the rest of her days. But her health was bad, and she died in the following year. Before her death, however, she made over house, furniture, and chapel to the Rev. Jonathan Scott, one of her *protégés*, whom she had installed as minister, the deed of gift being without limitation and restriction to himself and his wife. In her will, too, she left Scott £5,000 to be spent as he thought best on the training of young men for the ministry.

Above the dusty Glenorchy Chapel, on the right of the road where the steep hill turns with the stream, is a flaming modern villa, whose red tiles look garish and out of place. The Derwent bends to the left, and on that side the rugged cliffs fall away, giving place to a pleasant green slope, whereon stands Willersley Castle, a plain yet imposing stone building of three stories, the chief residence of the Arkwrights and long famous for the beauty of its grounds. A few yards further on the road pierces the rock and comes out into the broad cross-roads at Cromford. It is worth while, as we retrace our steps, to note the view from the lodge gates of Willersley, for this is what George Eliot called "the turn of the road at Cromford" and its beauty was famous in her day. It is a pretty picture, "esteemed by painters"—so Pilkington wrote in 1789—"the most compleat piece of scenery in the whole valley." But let us return and make our way to the top of Masson. Turning

up on the left hand by the side of the Temple we enter the private grounds of the Heights of Abraham. As we rise, we see that the fine cliffs of the Lovers' Walks are the sheer edge of a plateau of cultivated land running down from the hill behind. We are far from the vulgarities of the main road, though even here not quite secure from pressing invitations to see caverns, or to be photographed, or to buy picture postcards. The Heights of Abraham owe their name, it is said, to local enthusiasm for Wolfe's great victory outside Quebec, and another part of the slope labours under the name of the Heights of Jacob. The rest of the patriarchs have happily been spared. A stone tower on the Heights, a conspicuous landmark from the valley, offers a delightful view, but those who are wise will continue the easy ascent until they reach the summit of Masson —a thousand and seventy-six feet—not a peak, but a broad plateau with a large clump of wind-swept trees. From here the whole of Matlock Bank, with the north side of Darley Dale and the uplands above, looks a smooth unbroken ascent stretching away towards Ashover and Chesterfield. Riber Hill stands up boldly across the entrance to Darley Dale with its squat castle crouching on the top, but its sloping shoulder is cut off sharply by the gorge of the Derwent. By the side of Riber we can look over Scarthin down the railway past Cromford to the ruined Stand on Crich heights; we can see the ridges of Stonnis and Middleton-by-Wirksworth, and the densely-wooded depressions which mark the gorges through which run the roads to Bonsal and Winster. In the far distance we may distinguish the clumps about Newhaven; the line of Axe Edge is often visible, and over Stanton Lees we can make out the heights above Hathersage and Grindleford. The view from the summit of Masson can hardly be omitted from the finest prospects in the whole of Derbyshire. If the valley of the Derwent at its foot were better visible it could challenge comparison with the very best. But on this side the view is restricted. The descent from Masson to Matlock Bridge follows an easy and obvious track.



Emery Walker sc.

Present day Matlock is in great measure the creation of the late John Smedley. Matlock Bath, as a watering place of the Buxton and Harrogate type, attracting patients and quasi-patients by the curative properties of its thermal waters, had practically ceased to exist. The most obvious function of its principal spring was that of supplying the fishpond in the South Parade, where the big trout crowd together like the salmon in the rivers of British Columbia and turn incurious eyes on the tripper who offers them orange-peel and nut-shells. John Smedley did for Matlock what others of a previous generation had done for Matlock Bath. He was a practical eccentric, who rode to great profit his hobby of water and fresh air. Originally a manufacturer of hosiery, he was given to studying medical books, and so easily convinced himself that most doctors were mere empirics. He was also an energetic Primitive Methodist, fond of preaching to his workpeople, and if they would listen to his sermons, his bounty was freely placed at their disposal. "Water is best," he said with Pindar, and opened a free hospital on hydropathic principles for any of his mill hands who cared to try the cure. At length he quitted stocking-making to become the founder of those quaint compounds of hotel and nursing home which are known as "hydros." His establishment has had scores of imitators, most of which do not take themselves quite so seriously, and thus "hydro" is often no more than a synonym for an unlicensed hotel. Smedley made a handsome fortune, and the temple of this Matlock Æsculapius—Æsculapius himself was a hydropath, if we may judge from the abundant waterpipes which have been brought to light among the ruins of his ancient temples—dominates Matlock Bank like some gaunt Tibetan lamaserai. He also built himself Riber Castle on the top of Riber. It is now a school—the usual fate, apparently, of all grandiose private houses in this neighbourhood—and, like the Coliseum at Oban, it most effectively compels every stranger who sees it to ask who built it and why.

CHAPTER XXVII

MATLOCK BATH AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS

As a watering place Matlock Bath cannot boast the antiquity of Buxton. The first medicinal spring—the Old Bath—was discovered in 1698, but only a rude shanty was put up, for the spot was then almost inaccessible. However, in 1702, a coach road was made to Matlock Bath, as it soon began to be called, and the old bridle path from Matlock Bridge was widened and improved. The lease and buildings were purchased for £1,000 by Messrs. Smith and Pennel, of Nottingham. In 1735 a second spring, known as the New Bath, was discovered, a quarter of a mile to the south of the first one, and later on a third was found on what is now Museum Parade. Such were the humble beginnings of Matlock Bath. One of the earliest references to it occurs in Defoe's *Tour*, where the author notes the existence of several small springs, and says, "One of these is secured by a stone wall on every side, by which the water is brought to rise to a due height, and, if it is too high, there is a sluice to let it out as low as you please. It has a house built over it, and room within the building to walk round the bath, and so go by steps down gradually into it. The water is but just milk warm, so that it is no less pleasant to go into than sanative." William Bray, in 1777, merely states that there were two baths, "each possessing its appropriate conveniences." It was the custom for the company at each of the two hotels to dine together in a large room at

two, and take supper at eight, and the author adds that "the ordinary is moderate and every person drinks afterwards as he likes." Music and cards formed the after supper diversions. Evidently Matlock Bath had not yet become fashionable.

In 1802 Warner found the place still primitive and retired. He speaks of four medicinal springs, one at Saxton's, which stood upon a gentle eminence opposite to Wild Cat Tor—now bearing the name of Lovers' Walks—two at the Old Bath Hotel, and one at a third hotel. Their temperature varied from sixty-eight to seventy-two degrees. He describes the three hotels as offering "very good accommodations," and the prices were exceedingly reasonable. For example, one might hire a bedroom for the week for five shillings, and a private parlour for a guinea. Breakfast cost fifteen pence, public dinner two shillings, and supper a shilling. No extra charge was made for the use of the large common sitting and dining rooms, and the fee for the medicinal bath was sixpence. In fact the daily hotel bill of the visitor to Matlock Bath a hundred years ago was hardly more than the present charge for a table d'hôte dinner at one of the huge palaces of luxury, which are now becoming the dominant feature of our inland and seaside watering places.

With improved roads Matlock Bath rapidly increased. The new coach road from Matlock through Belper to Derby was finished about 1815, superseding the old road over the hills through Wirksworth and Kedleston. When Ebenezer Rhodes was at Matlock Bath, about 1818, the Old Bath was still the principal hotel, with accommodation for a hundred visitors, and an Assembly Room, fifty-one and a half feet long, and twenty-two wide, had been built, "lighted with elegant glass chandeliers." This is now the Royal Hotel, but the modern building was moved about fifty yards nearer Cromford. The swimming bath, now on the Parade side of the hotel, was then on the further side. Saxton's, now the New Bath Hotel, was the second best inn, the Museum Hotel came third, and there were sundry "lodging-houses"—the word had not then wholly lost

its status—of which the best was The Temple, now a hotel of the same name. This, according to Rhodes, "was one of the most delightful residences in the place," and was connected with the Old Bath by a terrace along the hill-side. And, lest any one should fear to be bored in Matlock Bath for lack of elegant diversions, were there not, as Rhodes most carefully enumerates, "two or three billiard tables; a circulating library, and a number of spar and petrifaction shops"?

Twenty years later prices had risen considerably. In 1838 it was no longer possible to get a bath for sixpence. A tepid, swimming, or "plunging" bath, or a cold shower cost a shilling. If one wanted either variety of bath hot, the charge rose to half-a-crown. Clearly civilisation was making rapid strides. There had been changes, too, in the relative social position of the hotels, for we find that those selected for special praise were The Temple, Walker's, and Hodgkinson's. The last-named—still existing—was the principal coaching-house. About half-past ten in the morning, the Royal Mail from London to Manchester drove up, changed horses, and set off at a quarter to eleven. In a few minutes the Bruce and the Peveril of the Peak clattered up. These two were rivals, bound for Manchester from London, but they took the longer Bakewell and Buxton route. They were timed to leave at a quarter past eleven. Then there was a lull until a little after three in the afternoon when the Nelson, from Nottingham to Manchester, came in sight, to be off again at the half hour, and the last coach for the north was the Dart, running from Birmingham and Derby to Sheffield by a roundabout route. She was due to leave at six. There were also, of course, an equal number of coaches bound for the south. Matlock Bath was largely resorted to by Liverpool people, and one of the principal Assembly Rooms in the place was called, in their honour, the Liverpool Gallery Rooms.

By this time the fame of Matlock Bath was well established. Rhodes describes the "carriages rolling along the road by the riverside, and well-dressed ladies and gentlemen perambulating

the dale in various groups." The suggestion is of elegance walking delicately. But a writer named Lipscomb fortunately characterises the place for us in greater detail. "Matlock," he says, "must be allowed to possess advantages superior to the majority of watering places. It has gaiety without dissipation, activity without noise, and facility of communication with other parts of the country undisturbed by the bustle of a public road. It is tranquil without dulness, elegant without pomp, and splendid without extravagance. In it the man of fashion may at all times find amusement: the man of rank may find society by which he will not be disgraced, and the philosopher a source of infinite satisfaction; while they who travel in search of health will here find a silver clue that leads to her abode." What an irresistible combination of attractions! If there was a single drawback to the perfect felicity of Matlock Bath, it is perhaps to be found in the quality of the Brass Band, with which the Bath was "enlivened" during the season. The *Guide* of 1838 informs us that certain "young men of Matlock and Cromford have spiritedly come forward to perform alternately at one or other of the houses, or on the Parade, every evening; and sometimes parties engage them to play on the water where the music has a most charming effect." It was a band of amateurs, who depended solely on the generosity of the public for remuneration, and we have our suspicions that they were no better than the average wandering troupe of musicians—casual atoms which, when thrown together, assume the title of the Town Brass Band.

The scenery of Matlock and Matlock Bath has never, we believe, found a single detractor. The good Gilpin lavished upon it his most enthusiastic praise. "It is impossible," he wrote, "to view such scenes as these without feeling the imagination take fire. Every object is sublime and wonderful. Not only the eye is pleased but the imagination is filled. We are carried at once into the fields of fiction and romance. Enthusiastic ideas take possession of us." What

Gilpin demanded from Nature was that she should "throw her wild scenes into beautiful composition and decorate them with great and noble objects." He wanted the combination of rock and verdure, trees and water. We will not say he was wrong; there is evidently much to be said for a theory of the beautiful which, when challenged for a concrete instance, selects Matlock Bath as its exemplar. "I have never seen anywhere else," wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne, "such exquisite scenery as surrounds this village of Matlock." When we consider, however, how irresistible the charm of the Matlock country has proved to all who are responsive to the appeal of exquisite landscape, it is strange that it has been so little honoured in English poetry. Erasmus Darwin in his *Loves of the Plants* (Canto IV. *v.* 175 *seq.*) is almost at his very worst when he comes to Matlock:—

> "Where as proud Masson rises rude and bleak,
> And with misshapen turrets crests the Peak,
> Old Matlock gapes with marble jaws, beneath,
> And o'er scared Derwent bends his flinty teeth;
> Deep in wide caves below the dangerous soil
> Blue sulphurs flame, imprisoned waters boil;
> Impetuous streams in spiral columns rise
> Through rifted rocks, impatient for the skies."

Each noun has its laboured adjective to keep it company, and the lines are fit only for a schoolboy's exercise. They might have been written by a man who never saw Matlock and the Derwent, and not by a poet, like Darwin, who knew and loved the scenes he was describing. For despite Wordsworth, who said that Darwin was "a mere eye-voluptuary," and Rogers, who heartily scolded Mrs. Barbauld for talking of *The Botanic Garden* with rapture, Erasmus Darwin was a poet. Cowper was fascinated by him; Campbell said that *Cambyses' March* was "the finest passage in all English poetry." Canning and Frere laughed at him, but, said Lord Brougham, it is also certain that they stole from him. None the less, his lines on Matlock are very poor. Gisborne—not the Rev. Thomas, but Mr. John—did better, though his evangelicalism is a little tedious:—

"Nor from thy haunts
O Matlock, shall this heart be long withdrawn,
Nor e'er repine to meditate afresh
On scenes which ever please! Unlike the world
Whose friendship snares the bosom, yet with whom
Repeated converse serves but to expose
Delusive joys, thou dost endear thyself
Most closely when familiar; and to hold
Communion with thy river, rocks, and shade
In each revolving season, soothes the mind
And lulls the passions to Divine repose."

Rhodes tells us how he and Montgomery scaled the Heights of Abraham together one day, and rested at the alcove among the trees, about half-way up. The sky had been bright, but was clouded over, and to a heavy shower of rain there succeeded "a gentle sprinkling that fell with almost snowy softness, and formed a veil exquisitely fine, through which the different features of the scene became more soft and tender; all harmonised in form and colour by the thin medium through which they were beheld." The two friends stood and admired the prospect; then Montgomery turned and wrote in pencil on the wall of the alcove the following lines:—

"Here in wild pomp, magnificently bleak,
Stupendous Matlock towers amid the Peak;
Here rocks on rocks, on forests forests rise,
Spurn the low earth, and mingle with the skies.
Great Nature, slumbering by fair Derwent's stream,
Conceived these giant-mountains in a dream."

The first four lines do not rise above mediocrity, and the third is an obvious echo of a much better line of Pope's. But the last couplet, which is perfectly self-contained in itself and needs no introduction, is perhaps the best that Montgomery ever wrote. Yet, strange to say, the poet, not content to leave well alone, took out the allusion to the Derwent, and introduced the lines into a long and tedious didactic poem which he wrote on the West Indies!

The Derwent, which adds so much to the charm of Matlock Bath, has had many pretty things said in its praise. William Sampson, for example, a quaint forgotten poet of the early seventeenth century, indulges some pleasant conceits :—

> "Amid thy valleys Darwent swiftly runnes
> Who, like a tender mother, to her sonnes
> Yields foords and springs and waters, sweet and cleare
> As the blest sunne in his meridian spheare.
> There may you see the salmon, tench and trout,
> Like Neptune's Tritons, nimbly frisk about.
> Sometimes along the flower-enamelled vales
> She does inundate, and tells wanton tales
> Unto the meadows, for she takes a pride
> Her crystall limbes on pearly sands to glide,
> As if she were enamoured on the hill,
> Whose steepe descent her water-courses fill,
> As loth she were to leave the continent
> And thrust her head into her sister Trent."

I have found no lines on the Derwent more graceful than these. They far excel the stanzas which Anna Seward wrote in 1775 on her "favourite river" :—

> "There under pendant rocks, his amber flood,
> As Hebrus swift, impetuous Derwent pours ;
> And now, beneath the broad, incumbent wood,
> Silent and smooth and deep, he laves the shores ;
> Till gaily rushing from his darksome way,
> His foamy waters glitter on the day,
> Resistless, dashing o'er each rocky mound ;
> And still on his umbrageous bank he shows
> Woodbines and harebells and the musky rose ;
> The heavy velvet wild bees murmuring sound ;
> His every grace that decks Pieria's clime,
> Green vale and steepy hill and broken rock sublime."

No wonder Sir Walter Scott groaned when he went through the papers which the Swan of Lichfield had left to him, as her literary executor, to prepare for publication. "Most of her posthumous poetry"—he wrote to Johanna Baillie—"is

absolutely execrable." Squire Mundy, "the sagest magistrate on Derwent-side," as Miss Seward once reproachfully called him, chiding him for giving up poetry, in order to sit on the bench,

> "Shall Mundy bid the lyric pæan pause
> That county halls may murmur hoarse applause?"

wrote an address to the Derwent in 1792 to congratulate the stream on having Dr. Erasmus Darwin as a dweller on its banks.

> "Derwent, like thee, thy Poet's splendid song,
> With sweet vicissitudes of ease and force,
> Now with enchanting smoothness glides along,
> Now pours impetuous its resounding course.
>
> While Science marches down thy wondering dells,
> And all the Muses round her banners crowd,
> Pleased to assemble in thy sparry cells
> And chant her lessons to thy echoes loud.
>
> While here Philosophy and Truth display
> The shining robes those heaven-born sisters wove,
> While Fays and Graces beckon smooth their way
> And hand in hand with Flora follows Love."

Darwin, in the shape of an address to the Muses, had introduced into his *Botanic Garden: Economy of Vegetation*, a much admired reference to the death of Mrs. French, a sister of Squire Mundy, under the name of Milcena.

> "By Derwent's willowy dells,
> Where by tall groves his foamy flood he steers
> Through ponderous arches o'er impetuous wears,
> By Derby's shadowy towers reflective sweeps
> And Gothic grandeur chills his dusky deeps;
> You pearled with Pity's drops his velvet sides,
> Sighed in his gales and murmured in his tides,
> Waved o'er his fringèd bank a deeper gloom,
> And bowed his alders o'er Milcena's tomb."

Say what one will of the Lichfield circle – the Sewards, the Darwins, the Mundys, the Sneyds, the Edgeworths – they

believed heartily in one another, and were true to their friends. John Gisborne's lines on the Derwent are also worth quoting :—

> " Down the vale
> Comes Derwent, sovereign river of the Peak.
> But when he passes Megdale's tufted rocks
> Feeling the pressure of the narrowed vale,
> He foams, he frets, he wheels : and rushing thence
> Through arches half engulfed, where yonder bridge
> Presumes to check his congregated pace,
> Sweeps onward, careless of the opening scene
> Of beauty and magnificence combined.
> Yet, as if conscious of his mighty powers,
> As if to swell the triumph of his route,
> Just where the traveller stops oft to view
> The wondrous scene, to all the caverned hills
> He speaks in thunder ; calls on Matlock's Tor
> To wake the mountain echoes from repose
> And bids his billows with redoubled roar
> Toss high their tawny crests."

Byron was a not infrequent visitor at Matlock in the days of his early manhood, when he was under the spell of the charms of Mary Chaworth of Annesley Hall, a neighbouring estate to Newstead Abbey—herself the daughter of a lady who, as Fanny Burney tells us, had been a belle and reigning toast at Brighton. He went there simply because Mary was staying there, chaperoned by two ladies named White, and he hardly left her side. Her guardian, Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor, favoured Byron's suit, but she herself was cold. Years before she had mortally wounded his pride by speaking of him as " that lame boy "—words which he chanced to overhear—yet it is but fair to say that she never gave him the least encouragement. Byron's lameness prevented him from dancing, and he used to sit looking on moodily while Mary Chaworth danced at the balls in the Assembly Rooms of the Old Bath Hotel. Moore, in his *Life of Byron*, tells us how on one occasion Miss Chaworth was dancing with a partner who was a stranger to her – it was permitted at these public balls for any gentleman

to invite a lady to dance with him—and when she resumed her seat Byron turned to her pettishly and said, "I hope you like your friend." He had scarcely uttered the words when he was himself accosted by an ungainly-looking Scotch lady, who rather boisterously claimed him as "cousin," and was putting his pride to the torture, when he heard the voice of his fair companion retorting archly in his ear, "I hope you like *your* friend." It was not a pleasant visit for Byron, who is described as having "assumed a degree of hauteur and cold reserve towards all the company at the New Bath, which they did not consider it necessary to submit to, while Mary Chaworth, on the contrary, was all affability." But excuses may be made for one who was suffering the pangs of disdained love and furious jealousy. The sincerity of his passion has never been doubted: none but a devoted lover would have set on paper such poignant sentences as those in which he refers to his stay at Matlock with "my M. A. C." Then comes the outburst:—

"Alas! why do I say 'my'? Our union would have healed feuds in which blood had been shed by our fathers—it would have joined lands broad and rich, it would have joined at least one heart and two persons not ill matched in years (she is two years my elder) and—and—and—what has been the result?"

Doubtless, if Mary Chaworth had married Byron the course of his riotous and tempestuous career would have flowed in a calmer channel, but it is not easy under any circumstances to think of Byron leading an exemplary life of domestic felicity. Not only was he rendered miserable at Matlock by the insensibility of Mary Chaworth; he was goaded to fury by the sight of a favoured rival. This was Mr. John Musters—called "the king of gentlemen huntsmen"—a country squire of Nottinghamshire, who also used to follow Miss Chaworth about from place to place. Lord Eldon wrote to warn him that if he held communication or contracted a marriage with Miss Chaworth—then a ward in Chancery—he would be prosecuted to the utmost extent of the law. Musters seems

to have forwarded the letter to Mary, who boldly snapped her fair fingers at the Lord Chancellor and said, "you shall never have the power to prosecute Mr. Musters, my Lord; I will wait until I am of age and then your power ceases." And she was as good as her word! Nor was Musters daunted, for he continued to dog the footsteps of the Chaworth—Byron—White party. As soon as they heard of his arrival, off they set again in the hope of eluding him, but so spirited a lover as the charming Mary Chaworth always contrived to let her faithful swain know her whereabouts, and so skilled a Master of Hounds as John Musters was never long in picking up the trail. Mary Chaworth and John Musters were eventually married. It was a romantic match which linked two well-known Nottinghamshire estates; but alas! the union did not prove a happy one. Mary Musters—her title to fame is that she was "Byron's Mary"—died in 1832, from the results of a chill caught in her flight from Colwick Hall, on the outskirts of Nottingham, during the rioting at the time of the Reform agitation, when the "Nottingham lambs" burnt and pillaged Nottingham Castle.

Another great name which has close associations with Matlock is that of John Ruskin. He was taken there for the first time as a boy of ten, in 1829, by his mother and father, who delighted in Derbyshire scenery. No boy was ever more carefully trained by his parents to a love of poetry and the arts, and few children ever showed more precocious talent. We hear of him drawing a pencil outline of Saxton's New Bath Hotel—the precursor of many a thousand sketches that were to flow from his pencil, and he himself placed on record in later life his recollections of the pleasure he took during this visit in studying the minerals and rocks of the district. He wrote:—

"In the glittering white broken spar, specked with galena, by which the walks of the hotel were made bright, and in the shops of the pretty village, and in many a happy walk among its cliffs, I pursued my mineralogical

studies on fluor, calcite and the ores of lead, with indescribable rapture when I was allowed to go into a cave. My father and mother showed far more kindness than I knew in yielding to my subterranean passion, for my mother could not bear dirty places, and my father had a nervous feeling that the ladders would break, or the roof fall, before we got out again. They went with me, nevertheless, wherever I wanted to go, my father even into the terrible Speedwell mine at Castleton, where, for once, I was a little frightened myself."

It is an interesting picture, Mrs. Ruskin picking her way daintily among the rough and dirty places, and resigned to discomfort in order to please her only child; Mr. Ruskin, the artistic wine-merchant, testing the strength of the ladders or casting nervous glances at the roof; and the boy, with no boyish relish for cave-exploring as an adventure, but anxious only to learn more about rocks and spars.

Sixteen years later, in 1845, Ruskin, while writing of the charms of retirement, laments that real retirement was impossible to such a temperament as his father's. He was too much wrapped up in the routine of his business, and too much consumed with ambition for his brilliant son, whom he wished to see "moving in the western light of London, among its acknowledged literary orders of merit." But Mrs. Ruskin and Ruskin himself cherished faint and intermittent dreams of an idyllic country life of quiet, and had visions of "a rose-covered cottage in the dells of Matlock or the vale of Keswick . . . . that might be nearer the heavenly world for *us*, than all the majesty of Denmark Hill, connected though it was by the Vauxhall Road and convenient omnibuses with St. James's Street and Cavendish Square." Ruskin seems to have made many journeys to Derbyshire: in 1871 he came very near to ending his days at Matlock. He went there to spend the summer, which proved to be unusually wet. Writing one Midsummer morning to a friend, he thus describes the depressing prospect from his window:—

"I sit down to write by the dismallest light that ever I wrote by. For the sky is covered with grey clouds: not rain cloud but a dry black veil,

which no ray of sunshine can pierce ; partly diffused in mist, feeble mist, enough to make distant objects unintelligible, yet without any substance or wreathing or colour of its own. And everywhere the leaves of the trees are shaking fitfully, as they do before a thunderstorm ; only not violently, but enough to show the passing to and fro of a strange, bitter and blighting wind."

Even to read such a description is enough to make one shiver and think how cheerful a fire would be. On one of these miserable July mornings Ruskin rose early and went out before breakfast with his sketch-book. He began to paint a spray of wild rose—the picture now hangs in a gallery at Oxford—and took a chill, which he could not throw off. It developed into a severe attack of internal inflammation, and his obstinate refusal to take the medicines prescribed by the local doctor who was called in to see him, retarded his recovery. Apparently, he grew irritated at the doctor's remonstrances, and demanded to know what would be *worst* for him to take. He was told "Beef," and beef, and nothing but beef, would he have. Mrs. Arthur Severn has described how it was procured :—

"It was a slice of cold roast beef he hungered for at Matlock (to our horror and dear Lady Mount Temple's, who were nursing him). There was none in the hotel and it was late at night, and Albert Goodwin went off to get some somewhere or anywhere. All the hotels were closed, but at last at Matlock Bath he discovered some, and came home triumphant with it, wrapped up in paper. J . . . R . . . enjoyed his late supper thoroughly, and though we all waited anxiously till the morning for the result, it had done him no harm. And when he was told pepper was bad for him, he dredged it freely over his food in defiance."

Matlock Bath has another association which may also be recalled. John Wesley was there one day in 1761 and found the valley "from the town to the bath pleasant beyond expression." He did not come, however, as "a picturesque tourist" but as a preacher of the Word, and he tells us how he stood "under the hollow of a rock, on one side of a small plain, on the other side of which was a tall mountain." It was

in the height of the season, and among Wesley's auditors were many well-dressed gentlemen. One of these addressed him as he made his way back to the town and said, "Why do you talk thus of Faith? Stuff, nonsense!" Wesley made inquiries and on finding that the man was "an eminent Deist," he set down in his *Journal* the exclamation, "What! Has the plague crept into the Peak of Derbyshire?" It is no argument, but we like it none the worse for that.

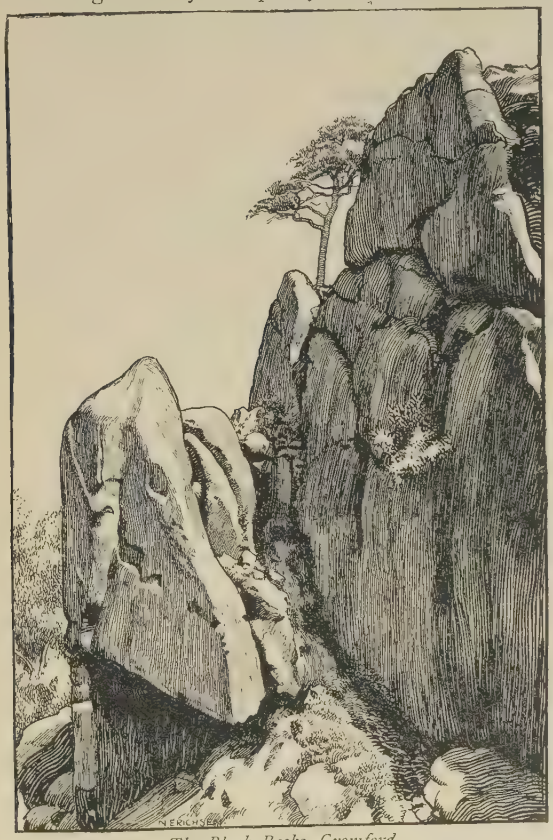
CHAPTER XXVIII

CROMFORD TO WIRKSWORTH, ALDERWASLEY AND CRICH

From Cromford the road to Wirksworth ascends for a long mile with toilsome steepness. Slowly it shakes itself clear of houses, and then on the left hand we see the famous Cromford or Black Rocks, frowning down the valley in solemn and sombre dignity. If we leave the road and make our way towards them, we cross the High Peak Railway, which, regardless of gradients, however desperate, has come climbing up from the river side, two miles out of Cromford. The rocks lose their dense blackness when we approach them, and are seen to be of no deeper colour than grey as they stand out from the face of the hill in a series of bastions of irregular outline and varying size. The slope, covered with brushwood and shrubs down to the railway, is littered with the *débris* of the hill top—huge boulders which have fallen with resounding crash in bygone ages. The Black Rocks provide ample opportunity for the cragsman to show his endurance and the fool his folly in attempting to scale them. For us the less heroic approach from the side of the adjoining quarry!

From the top, the view towards Matlock is superb, despite the mills at the entrance to the Lovers' Walks, for the rich woods lie in dense masses on the lower slopes of Masson, and the gorges of the Derwent are a perfect delight. Cromford lies picturesquely below us with Willersley Castle and its trees for a charming background, and the eye can follow round from

the summit of Riber to the woods of Lea Hurst. To the left the high ground is barer, and the cliffs above Middleton have been torn and gashed by the quarrymen, whose handiwork you



The Black Rocks, Cromford.

can trace along the ridges towards Wirksworth. Here, too, one sees better the peculiarities of the Black Rocks themselves. Their base lies in the hill side, some eighty feet below, and they are divided into five great bastions, detached from

one another by deep clefts. Each has its name, each its own fantastic shape. A pine tree grows on the furthest bastion on the Wirksworth side. But the finest of the series is one which looks as though it had been built of successive deep layers of rock, the topmost one projecting from the edge, and each layer worn deeply away where it rests upon the one below.

Rejoining the road, and escaping from the region of the railway bridges and embankments, we soon drop down into Wirksworth, the gigantic quarries on the right contrasting with the unscarred green slopes on the left, at the foot of which lies the little town. On the outskirts is an old Baptist burial ground, a curious patch with a quaint mortuary chapel, and an imposing board setting forth the table of fees. Wirksworth's status has woefully fallen in the last half century. It used to be the centre of the lead mining industry in Derbyshire—the miners' metropolis. Here stood the Moot Hall where they met for their conclaves, and were a law unto themselves. It is still to be seen in a by-street, a single-storeyed structure, not of much interest, for it only dates from 1814, when, as the stone tells us, it was built by the direction of the Rt. Hon. Charles Bathurst, Chancellor of His Majesty's Duchy and County Palatine of Lancaster. Now it is used as a dissenting chapel. Here, twice a year, the Barmoot Courts were held, and here was kept the ancient brass dish, holding fourteen pints, for measuring the lead ore. Round its rim is an inscription setting forth that it was made "in the iiij yere of the reign of Kyng Henry the VIII., before George Earle of Shrowesbury" by the assent and consent of all the miners of Wirksworth. "This Dishe to remayne in the Moote Hall at Wyrkysworth, hangyng by a cheyne so as the Merchauntes or mynours may have resorte to the same at all tymes to make the true mesure after the same." There is now hardly a single dish of ore taken from the local lead-mines in a whole year; the population has deserted the mines for the quarries. Yet

Derbyshire lead was reputed to be the best in England, and indeed in Europe. "It is not churlish," said old Thomas Fuller, "but good-natured metal, not curling into knots and knobs, but all equally fusile, and therefore most useful for pipes and sheets. . . . As if Phœbus himself had been their Vulcan, massy pieces of lead are frequently found so well ripened in the bowels of the earth that they seem refined, such the original purity thereof."

This is not the place for a dissertation on lead-mining, but some of the old miners' customs were too unique to be omitted. It was, for example, a recognised practice that throughout the King's Field—*i.e.* the hundreds of the High Peak and the Wirksworth Wapentake or Low Peak -any man might search for veins of ore wherever he chose, save in house, church, or garden, irrespective of the damage he did to crops or to the surface of the ground. Then, in order to mitigate the intolerable nuisance that this must have caused, the custom grew up that unless the searcher found sufficient to pay a dish of ore to the King or his farmer—in the technical sense—or his lessee, he was liable for damage. If, however, he found lead, the Barmaster was informed, and, provided that the vein was duly worked, the finder was awarded a "meer" or measure of ground, and the unfortunate landowner or tenant had to look on and see the lucky miner making an utter mess of his property with "buddle ponds" and tailings and other unsightly things, while footpaths were opened to the nearest villages. This meer he called his "privilege." If the vein was left unworked for a certain length of time anyone else might come along and claim it. No wonder there were constant disputes, and that the landowners of Derbyshire are not altogether sorry at the decay of lead-mining. "For the grace of God and what I can find," was the old prayer of the Derbyshire lead-miner.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, a poem was written by a certain Edward Manlove, a steward of the Barmoot Court, setting forth all the liberties and customs of

the miners, and describing the courts which were held twice a year for the punishment of criminals and the settlement of all disputes. Theft of ore was considered a very serious offence.

> "For stealing oar twice from the minery,
> The thief that's taken fined twice shall be,
> But the third time that he commits such theft,
> Shall have a knife stuck through his hand to th' haft,
> Into the stow, and there till death shall stand,
> Or loose himself by cutting loose his hand,
> And shall forswear the franchise of the mine,
> And always lose his freedom from that time."

The "stow," it should be explained, was a wooden frame at the top of the mine, up which the tubs of ore were drawn to the surface. The miners, who had to pay lead tithes to the parson, did not always do so cheerfully, and on this head Manlove addressed some very pertinent lines to the clergy. He said:—

> "Small parcels yet small men may sell for need,
> If they cannot procure the dish with speed,
> Provided always that to church and lord
> They pay all duties custom doth afford,
> For which the vicar daily ought to pray
> For all the miners that such duties pay.
> And reason good, they venture lives full dear
> In dangers great, the vicar's tythe comes clear;
> If miners lose their lives, or limbs or strength,
> He loseth not, but looketh for a tenth.
> But yet, methinks, if he a tenth part claim,
> It ought to be but a tenth of clear gain,
> For miners spend much money, pains and time,
> In sinking shafts before lead oar they find,
> And one in ten scarce finds, and then to pay
> One out of ten poor miners would dismay.
> But use them well, they are laborious men;
> And work for you, You ought to pray for them."

Evidently there was the making of a good Radical in Edward Manlove. Lead tithes were paid at Castleton and at Eyam, where in good years they raised the value of the living to £1,500. The Wirksworth miners protested against the tithes;

appealed to the Court of Chancery and the Privy Council, and after 1778 the vicar's portion was reduced to one-fortieth. In Ashover and Matlock the parsons had resort to litigation in order to enforce payment, but without success.

The Derbyshire lead-miners, who were highly esteemed in the British army as sappers, aroused the wonder of most visitors to the county. Defoe describes how, near Matlock, he watched a miner emerge with difficulty from one of the curious shafts, or "grooves" as they were then called, a narrow hole leading straight down into the mine with timber steps at its sides. This man was clothed in a leather suit and cap, and Defoe says he was "as lean as a skeleton, pale as a corpse, his hair and beard a deep black; what little flesh he had was lank and, as we thought, something of the colour of the lead itself." He spoke with so uncouth a dialect that Defoe could not understand what he said until his guide acted as interpreter. Women, too, worked in the lead-mines, and wore, according to a visitor's account in 1829, an extraordinary garb. "The head," he said, "is much enwrapped, and the features nearly hidden in a muffling of handkerchiefs, over which is put a man's hat, in the manner of the paysannes of Wales." Their gowns were usually red, tucked up round the waist into a sort of bag, and set off by a bright green petticoat. A man's coat of grey or dark blue completed the costume, and to protect their feet they wore rough shoes with soles three inches thick, tied round with cords and thongs. The writer frankly describes them as "complete harridans." But the Peakrills generally were reputed to be "a rude, boorish kind of people." The phrase is Defoe's. Prebendary Gilpin from the polite south was horrified. "The inhabitants of these scenes," he wrote in 1772, "are as savage as the scenes themselves. We were reminded by a disagreeable contrast of the pleasing simplicity and civility of manners which we found among the lakes and mountains of Cumberland. Here a wild, uninformed stare, through matted, dishevelled locks, marks every feature, and the traveller is

followed, like a spectacle, by a crowd of gazers." But wages were dreadfully low. At the Ecton mines, which brought the Duke of Devonshire £10,000 a year, a miner was paid one shilling for six hours' work ; women could only earn from fourpence to eightpence a day ; and boys and girls from twopence to fourpence. So, at least, Bray reports in 1777.

But we are wandering from Wirksworth, whose chief pride

Wirksworth Church.

is its cruciform church of thirteenth-century date, though an earlier church stood here in the days of the Saxon Abbey of Repton, to which Wirksworth belonged. The tower is in the middle of the building, and is capped by a little spire many sizes too small. The church has been frequently restored—Rhodes describes how in 1820 he found it "undergoing a thorough regeneration." Others would use a different word, for irreparable damage was committed. It was then that

the ancient sculptured stone—now built into the north wall of the nave—was discovered beneath the chancel. It was once, doubtless, the lid of a coffin, and is covered with pre-Norman figures, grouped to represent scenes in the life of CHRIST. In the centre is a lamb carved upon a plain cross. Another interesting old stone, built into the wall of the south transept, represents a pilgrim with a wallet. The monuments are disappointing. A knight of the time of Henry VIII. lies in the chancel, and there are tablets to the Lows and Hurts of Alderwasley, and the Gells of Hopton. One memorial stone bears upon it such well-known Midland names as Gell, Arkwright, Strutt and Wright of Nottingham. In the vestry is a curious portrait of the Rev. Abraham Bennett, F.R.S., who was curate of Wirksworth for 23 years and died in the town in 1799. He was vicar of Fenny Bentley near Tissington and the author of *New Experiments on Electricity*.

Another curate at Wirksworth, a century and a half ago, named Beighton, was a friend of Garrick, who used to visit him occasionally. Beighton was a scholar, a book-lover, and an enthusiastic gardener, and Garrick was importunate on his behalf with some of his powerful friends until he procured him a living near London. His needs and ambitions were modest. "My dear friend," he used to say to Garrick, "could I have £50 a year for a curate, and £50 to keep up my little garden, I would feel no ambition beyond it." "And £30 more," said Garrick slyly, "to keep Hannah your housekeeper." "Pooh!" said Beighton, "you turn everything to ridicule; come, let me show you the finest *arbor vitae* in the country." Beighton died in 1771, and Lord Camden, the Lord Chancellor, described him as "one of the best men Christianity had ever produced, and one whom we must never hope to see again unless we go to heaven." Garrick wrote his epitaph:—

> "Near half an age, with every good man's praise,
> Among his flock the shepherd passed his days;

The friend, the comfort of the sick and poor,
Want never knocked unheeded at his door.
Oft when his duty called, disease and pain
Strove to confine him, but they strove in vain.
All mourn his death, his virtues long they try'd,
They knew not how they loved him till he dy'd
Peculiar blessings did his life attend,
He had no foe, and Camden was his friend."

Wirksworth church has been called the Cathedral of the Peak, but this title belongs with much greater propriety to Tideswell, with which, if the truth be told, Wirksworth church cannot compare in beauty or in interest. It is a fine, spacious building, but it has the air of having been rescued from bad keeping after long years of careless neglect. It stands high in the middle of the town, surrounded by a large churchyard, in one half of which the tombstones are erect, while in the other half they lie flat on the ground. The contrast is not pleasing; it looks too much like a premature division of sheep and goats

Wirksworth has little else of interest, though a ten minutes' stroll through its principal streets will bring to light a few old inns and old houses bearing the unmistakable stamp of the market town which stood on the high road and saw through traffic. Those of us who are enthusiasts for *Adam Bede* will walk down the Derby Road and look at the little wayside cottage which was the home for many years of Dinah Morris's prototype. It lies rather more than a mile out of Wirksworth —or Snowfield, to give it the name under which it appears in the novel. The Haarlem Tape Works, of which Samuel Evans—the husband of Elizabeth Evans—was manager, is a red brick structure by the side of a large mill-dam. The mill is an old one, built of stone up to the first storey and then of brick above, with a stubby chimney, which, when I saw it, emitted a dense black smoke that hung in the still air like a pall. A new brick wing has been built on to the mill at the back, and the manager's stone house stands below. It is not the mill, however, which we have come to see, but the cottage

on the left-hand side of the road, to which it stands at right angles. This is a two-storeyed building, whose thatched roof gave way a year ago to commonplace slate. The door is in the middle, with no window above it, and the ground floor consists of two rooms, one on either side the door, and a little room leading out of one of these. There are two rooms above, but the plan has been changed somewhat since the Evanses lived there. What used to be the kitchen—the room to the left as you enter—is now the parlour, and the staircase has been moved. The garden in front—a medley of flowers and vegetables—is of recent date, for a cart track once ran up in front of the house. Here lived the Evanses, well known in the neighhourhood for their enthusiastic piety and their untiring devotion to good works. Elizabeth Evans had occasionally to contend with the more conservative Methodists, who looked askance on women who possessed the gift of tongues and the power of prophesying, and for some years she actually seceded from the Methodist Church in order to join an offshoot known as the Arminian Methodists. This body merged in another obscure branch called the Methodist Association, but, long before her death in 1849, Elizabeth Evans had made her peace with the parent church, and her virtues are recorded on a tablet in the Bede Memorial Chapel at Wirksworth. She lies buried in the old churchyard, but as she expressly desired that no stone should be put up to her memory, her grave cannot now be distinguished with certainty.

Samuel Evans, also, was an ardent and enthusiastic preacher, and used to hold meetings in the mill—meetings of the old Methodist kind, where fervour was considered a necessary sign of grace, and results were reckoned up by counting the heads of the "gentle convertites." That little roadside cottage has been the scene of much "wrestling in prayer," much song, much praise, and much assurance. So have thousands of other cottages where have dwelt souls just as sincere as Samuel and Elizabeth Evans, but they have not had a George Eliot for their niece. And if there be any who are inclined to look

askance upon Samuel Evans holding forth to his workpeople on the mysteries of religion, let them glance down the Derby Road and imagine they see a sturdy figure striding up it, at a pace which would leave them standing still. It is Samuel Evans, the preacher, delighting in the play of his muscles, and ready any day to walk out here to Mill Houses—as the little spot is called—from Derby Market Place in a round two hours. The distance is a full thirteen miles.

You can just see the tip of Wirksworth church spire over the brow of the intervening rise, but you shall have a noble view of the whole valley if you will climb to the high ground above. From the mill retrace your steps for a hundred yards until you come to a footpath on the right, which crosses at the top of the field the single-line branch railway from Duffield to Wirksworth, and then mounts up the steep hillside. It swells into a cart track and then crosses another near a farm. Once more a footpath, it rises steeply to some wooden posts in the corner of the field, and a spacious view unfolds itself. From here we see how charmingly Wirksworth lies in the cup of the hills, and how it is sheltered under the lee of the spur which strikes down into the valley. This is the hill which, as we descended into the town, lay on our right hand and showed nothing but the scars of the quarries. Here the quarries are invisible ; we only see the reverse side and the pleasant houses nestling among the trees. Away in the distance is the road over the ridge, and on the far horizon the tree-topped hill which we know to be Masson. However, we are not yet on the rim of the basin in which Wirksworth lies, and our path leads through three fields (across a road) to the wood opposite, and then through a succession of continuing fields to a road by a farm. Turn leftwards and, where the road immediately forks, keep up to the right through a little hamlet to the real top of the hill. Here we can look far down the valley towards Belper and across to the ridge above Hopton. The wooded knoll below us is Gilkin, and what we may call the upper Wirksworth Valley opens out, disclosing the line of quarries, but giving us a finer

view of the sweep of Barrel Edge. Not often have we to find fault with the accuracy of George Eliot's description of places, but few who have toiled up out of the valley to where we stand will agree with her summary dismissal of Wirksworth in the phrase, "The town lay grim, stony and unsheltered, up the sides of a steep hill." It is not grim, it is not stony—except by the approach from Cromford—and it certainly is not unsheltered.

We now begin to look eastwards towards the hills and valleys of the Derwent, and run out into the main road to Belper—a little to the right of the cross-roads, best known by the name of their lonely inn, the Noah's Ark. Turning rightwards, we get the new distant landmark of Crich Stand, high upon its quarried hill, while the towers of Riber are visible to the left. A sign-post speedily signals us to quit the Belper road and turn down to the left for Alderwasley, in the pronunciation of which great stress is laid upon the concluding syllable, though the local people often clip it to Allersloe. The way lies through rural scenery, pleasant as one could wish to see, and fringed with noble ash and sycamore. Alderwasley is a pretty, straggling village which has its vague traditions of having once trembled at the sound of war's rude alarms. Opposite the school is a field called Killcroft, and the farm at the foot of the rising ground beyond is Buryhill Farm. But when the fight was fought no one knows. It was "in old times"—that must suffice. We mount the little hill and, as we descend again, reach, on the left hand, the old village church, St. Margaret's, now used only as a mortuary chapel. The interior is funereal and dismal; the oak panelling round the walls was made out of the old pews. Over one of the entrance doors, now filled up, is an ancient tablet of marble or white stone, protected by thick glass, showing the arms of the Low family, who dwelt at Alderwasley Hall before the estate passed by marriage into the possession of the Hurts.

But the little cemetery is most beautifully kept, with turf as trim as a college lawn, and fine rhododendrons which make a

rich blaze of colour in their season. This is the private burial place of the Hurts, divided from the villagers' resting place by a stone wall. Both are new; indeed, until a few years ago, every interment had to be made at Wirksworth, and the journey over the hills in severe weather must have been dreadful. Why? No doubt because the Wirksworth parsons clutched their burial fees. From here a most gracious view extends over towards Crich Stand. Crich village, to the right of the Stand, is three miles away—so the sign-post tells us just below, where we turn leftwards and have the finely-timbered Alderwasley Park upon our right. It does not look so far, but we have to dip down into the hollow, and the other side is steep. Alderwasley Hall, not visible from the road, came into the possession of the Hurts in 1670 by the marriage of Nicholas Hurt, of Casterne, in Staffordshire, with Elizabeth Low, who succeeded to the Alderwasley estates on the death of her brother without issue. She was the granddaughter of the Edward Low whose memorial we saw in Wirksworth Church. He had been an ardent Royalist in the Civil War, and lost his eldest son at the Battle of Gainsborough in 1643, the fight where the gallant Colonel Cavendish also fell.

At the foot of the hill is Whatstandwell, where the Derwent, the main road, the railway and the Cromford canal all lie amicably together in the wooded valley. Here the river is spanned by a fine bridge, to the builder of which the little village owes its curious name. For, late in the fourteenth century, so we learn from the records of Darley Abbey, one Walter Stonewell, who dwelt near by, built this bridge and, as Wat was the common abbreviation of Walter, Whatstandwell Bridge is really Wat Stonewell's Bridge. Naturally, such a name has suffered many contortions. Even as late as 1830 it is found in print under the disguise of Hot-stand-well and Hot-Stanwell. A popular derivation was "Will't stand well?"—a sceptical inquiry as to the stability of the structure. Crossing the string of bridges, we mount the opposite hill and obtain, as we look back, a fine view of the noble woods through which

we have passed. Turn at the side of the village school and keep well to the left until Crich Stand comes into sight. It looks tantalisingly near, but it has to be outflanked and taken in the rear by long *détour*. It was evening when I approached it and had to hurry to gain the summit ere the sun sank, like a molten ball of fire, over Matlock, between Masson and Riber. After the heat of the day the mist hung close and low, but I could distinguish the tangle of ridges between the Stand and Masson, each with its fringe of green woods. To count them is impossible, so confusedly do they merge one into the other. This view from Crich Stand—the vowel, by the way, is long—is one of the most beautiful in the county. Though the hill is only nine hundred and fifty feet above sea-level, its situation is most happy. The fairest side is towards Matlock, up the Derwent Valley by the woods of Lea Hurst, where the broad hill, intersected by winding roads, rises steeply up towards Wirksworth and confronts the wooded heights beyond Holloway and Dethick. If we change our station, we have the big straggling village of Crich itself below us, while the smoke, curling up densely a few miles away, marks the lime-kilns of Bullbridge, near Ambergate. On that side, and towards Ripley and Alfreton, a large plateau lies at our feet, and beyond it, at a lower level, spreads a wider weald that stretches far away to the left, where the ground mounts to the Ashover country and the uplands of the Matlock and Darley Moors.

The Stand, some fifty feet high, is a round tower set on a square base of massive blocks of stone. It looks strong enough to last for centuries, and so, doubtless, it would have done had not the lightning found it a few years ago, which, with a single stroke, drove deep fissures into it from top to bottom and tore away some of the upper blocks. The door-way, therefore, which used to give entrance to the staircase within, has been filled up and the fabric is most insecure. Originally built in 1788 by Francis Hurt, of Alderwasley, and rebuilt in 1851, it rests on the edge of a gigantic quarry which has been continuously worked for about sixty years. In places

the hill itself seems willing to simplify the task of the quarrymen, for stupendous masses of stone have been partially riven from the side and appear to be waiting for a slight shock of earthquake to come tumbling to the ground. Geologically, Crich Cliff is of some interest, owing to its being a mass of carboniferous limestone thrust up through the measures of sandstone and shale. Sixty years ago the Crich district was described as the richest mineral field in the whole wapentake of Wirksworth.

The village is dull, though the church contains memorials of a Bellairs, a Beresford—son and heir of Adam Beresford, of Fenny Bentley—a German Pole of Wakebridge, and a John Clay, whose first wife was the daughter of the Chief Cock Matcher and Servant of the Hawks to Henry VIII. There is also a curious brass to the infant child of a former rector, "Noe sooner bloomed but blasted, Yet to revive with time at the refreshing." The church, whose tower and steeple are landmarks only less familiar than the Stand, is in the higher part of the village, which straggles on for a mile and a half along the rather tedious road leading down to Bullbridge and Ambergate.

CHAPTER XXIX

HEAGE AND PENTRICH

Passing under the railway bridge at Ambergate, opposite the new church on the road to Belper, let us begin the ascent towards Heage. The first landmark is soon reached in Heage Firs, a name given to a group of dejected fir trees standing on a little patch of uncultivated ground at the cross-roads. Two of these poor castaways are stone dead, the remaining four have just sufficient vitality to deck their withered branches with a few leaves. Beyond is a level stretch of a quarter of a mile; then the road plunges downwards into the straggling and untidy outskirts of Heage, and mounts the other side past a windmill on the left and the new village school on the right. The old endowed school with a thatched roof, whose place it has taken, is close by, while on the crest of the hill stands a large National School—empty of scholars. Heage proper lies up here at the summit, on the main road from Belper to Chesterfield, and the spreading stables of the inn testify to vanished importance. The church is certainly one of the ugliest in Derbyshire. The chancel is not unpleasing, but the main body was rebuilt in the early part of the nineteenth century in the very crudest of styles. And even the stone chancel has been vulgarised by having a common brick out-house attached to it, with two crude chimneys which would deface a wash-house.

In the exterior wall of the chancel is a stone with the inscription, "G.P. 1661," referring to George Poole or Pole, who

lived at Heage Hall, an old mansion lying away to the left of the road by which we entered the village. Here, not many years ago, a diamond pane of glass was found, bearing the legend,

"*Trop heureux en toi*
Malheureux en moi."

At once the theory was started that this was written by Mary, Queen of Scots, who, when a prisoner at Wingfield Manor, only a few miles away, might have visited the Poles at Heage Hall. It is possible, but decidedly far-fetched. Many generations have lived in the ancient hall, and it is much easier to suppose that the lines were scratched on the pane in a moment of idleness by some languishing gallant or maid.

From Heage our direction lies almost due north, and for a mile we keep along a high ridge. On our right is a broad valley stretching across to Ripley and the iron-works at Butterley, whose furnaces send up a continual pillar of fire by day and night. The picturesqueness of the scene is marred by the high embankment of the railway to Codnor Park and the Erewash Valley, but the view straight before us as we descend the hill is one of considerable beauty. Wingfield Park—not to be confused with the Manor or the Hall—is fresh and unspoilt, and to its left we look towards Bullbridge and Ambergate, with alluring glimpses of miniature valleys. Crossing railway and canal, we enter upon the main road to Ripley. This, however, we quit on reaching the Methodist chapel, lit by a lantern in the roof, opposite the gates of Wingfield Park, and take the Chesterfield road on the left. The by-road to Pentrich soon branches off to the right, but for a pleasant by-path continue along the Chesterfield road until you come to a corn mill on the left, whose wheel is turned by the Amber. Opposite the mill a smithy once stood. It has vanished now, but the foot-path remains which leads up through the fields. This broad track used to bear the name of Deadman's Lane, not from any relics which had been found there, but because by this way dead men were borne to their last resting place in Pentrich

Churchyard. There was no burying place at Heage until the nineteenth century was well advanced. When our foot-path makes a second turn at right angles—this time to the left—we find ourselves upon the line of the old Ryknield Street, of which

Oriel Window in North Court, Wingfield Manor.

a curious little fragment has escaped obliteration and is quite unmistakable. Though one side is raised fully six feet above the level of the other, the two hedges, twenty yards or so apart, continue for a little way their parallel course, until first one fails and then the other. This was the Roman road from Little Chester, just outside Derby, to Chesterfield. It ran by

the side of Breadsall Priory to the right of Horsley. Then, for more than three miles, from Bottlebrook Houses through Denby Station to Marshay Farm, the Ryknield Street is still in use. From Marshay Farm to the spot where we have struck it, it has long been ploughed up, but we shall find other traces of it a mile further on.

Here, from this corner, we can see the gilded arrow of the vane of Pentrich Church shining above the trees at the top of the steep field. The church is an interesting structure, much of which dates from Norman times, and one or two of its memorials are worth a passing notice. The Major Jessop, for example, of Butterley Hall, who served during the Peninsular War with the Forty-fourth Regiment, and was severely wounded at Waterloo, must have been one of the oldest survivors of that great fight, for he lived to see his ninetieth year in 1869. Another memorial is to a sea captain, who, "after long and faithful service against the French and Spaniards," settled down in his birth-place at Butterley, and died in 1764. But who was the Madame Mawers, youngest daughter of Mr. Joseph White, who died in 1776, aged twenty-two, of whom we are told, "She was as great a linguist as this nation ever produced. She was a very religious, beautiful, virtuous, dutiful, loving and affectionate wife." Her celebrity was strictly local. The biographical dictionaries do not know her name.

From the church a long flight of steps leads to the level of the road, and we find ourselves in Pentrich, a typical English village, quiet and remote. Yet Pentrich was once the home of a revolution, which began in wild talk, came to fruition in futile bloodshed and ended on the gallows. Save in the district, the story has long been forgotten; let us, therefore, recall the main facts. In 1817, when George IV. was Regent and the Government was in the hands of the well-detested Lord Liverpool, distress and discontent were general, and the labourers of Pentrich, Wingfield and Swanwick—like the

artisans in the big towns—fell an easy prey to the schemes of hare-brained revolutionaries. I can find no evidence that the distress in Pentrich was more acute than elsewhere, nothing to show why it should have been made the headquarters of a conspiracy to march on London and overthrow the existing *régime*. The strong beer at the White Horse—a little inn, kept by widow Weightman, which has long since been pulled down—and the bombast of Jeremiah Brandreth, combined with an absolute ignorance of the perils of the undertaking, had most to do with gaining recruits. These were promised lands and estates when they had overthrown the Government, and Brandreth assured them that success was easy and certain. This Brandreth—"the Nottingham captain," as he was generally called—was a short, thick-set man of twenty-six, whose only qualification for leadership was the violence of his speech and action. From the evidence given at his trial it is clear that he had gained a great ascendancy over those in the plot, but he was absolutely incapable of thinking out a scheme of concerted action. He used to sit with his confederates in the White Horse parlour—the inn stood where the Post Office is now—with maps spread out on the table before him, tracing with his pipe-stem the route by which he would lead them to London, and showing at what points they would be joined by other hosts, all rising like themselves against the tyrants. Then, as a sort of incantation, he used to repeat over and over again the following doggerel lines:—

> "Every man his skill must try,
> He must turn out and not deny;
> No bloody soldier must he dread
> He must turn out and fight for bread;
> The time is come, you plainly see,
> The Government opposed must be."

Each village, he would say, must destroy its own vermin. They would begin by burning Colonel Halton's house over his head at South Wingfield—the Colonel was a magistrate—and

then attack the iron-works at Butterley. And, as they went along, they would call at each house, make all the able-bodied men join them on pain of death, and seize every gun in the neighbourhood.

Such was the plot. When at last the eventful day arrived, Brandreth and some twenty men from South Wingfield met near that village at a place called Hunt's Barn. After calling at a few houses and demanding arms and recruits, some moved down to the Wire Mill, where the road from Crich to Pentrich crosses the Amber, while Brandreth and others went on to Wingfield Park. At a house where a Mrs. Hepworth lived with her son and daughters and two men-servants, the revolutionists demanded entrance, tried to break in the front door, and then went round to the back and forced open the windows of the kitchen, where all the inmates were collected. Brandreth raised his gun and fired into the room. The charge struck one of the men-servants, Robert Walters, while he was bending down to lace his boots, and killed him on the spot. So senseless a murder shocked Brandreth's followers and they upbraided him, but he browbeat them into silence and, after plundering the house, they went on. At Pentrich lane they were joined by the party from the Wire Mill and some attempt was made to get the men into military order. They were formed in twos, those with guns being placed in the front ranks and those with pikes in the rear. Then they entered Pentrich, where officers were appointed, and Brandreth made a speech.

By this time their numbers seem to have risen to about a hundred, and they took the road to the Butterley Iron-works, between Pentrich and Ripley. Here preparations had been made to receive them, for special constables had been sworn in, but most of these had gone off home at three o'clock in the morning. They had heard guns being fired and other unusual noises, but, as they were not molested, they thought the revolution had been postponed. One suspects that they were not too eager to stop. Consequently, only the manager, Mr. Goodwin,

and about a dozen others, armed with pikes, were in the works, when Brandreth formed his men into line before the gates. He knocked at the door with the butt end of his gun. Mr. Goodwin appeared and asked what he wanted, and when Brandreth demanded that the men should turn out and join him, Mr. Goodwin resolutely denounced him for his criminal folly, saying that the laws were too strong for him and that they would all be hanged. Brandreth, instead of shooting the manager, as he had boasted that he would do, fell back without a word, and gave the order to march. From that moment all spirit went out of the revolution, for the men lost faith in their leader. Fortune, too, favoured the brave, for, as a horseman came riding up to join the rebels, Mr. Goodwin seized his bridle and got him to promise to go home. When the rider turned the horse's head round, Mr. Goodwin saw a bag concealed behind his smock-frock. "You rascal!" he shouted, "I must have that bag," and, when the man refused, he dragged him from his horse. The bag was full of bullets.

Meanwhile, the revolutionists tramped into Ripley, where they gave three cheers, and then went on to Codnor. Here they divided into three sections—the reason being that there were only three public-houses in the village—and received reinforcements from Swanwick. At the toll-gate at Langley Mill they met one of their number who had been sent on ahead to find out how matters were shaping in Nottingham. He brought back unfavourable news, which Brandreth suppressed and announced that all was going well. It began to be whispered, however, that the soldiers were out, and on the road between Langley Mill and Eastwood a number of desertions took place, and most of the pressed men made good their escape. One of the latter, a Pentrich man named Hole, openly defied Brandreth when he raised his gun, and told him that he would hack his head off with his paring knife. Brandreth moved away, but shouldered his gun again as soon as Hole turned his back, and would have shot him had he not been restrained. An old

tan-yard at Giltbrook, about a mile from Kimberley, marked the furthest advance of Brandreth's little army. He was in the act of forming his men into line, when Captain Phillips and a troop of the 15th Hussars from Nottingham Barracks came on the scene and at once charged. The effect was magical. Without waiting for the shock, the revolutionists flung down their arms and fled in all directions. The Pentrich rebellion was at an end. Brandreth and nearly fifty of his associates were captured, lodged in Nottingham gaol and stood their trial at the next Derby Assizes. The verdict was never in doubt, though Mr. Denman, subsequently Lord Chief Justice, did his best for the prisoners and compared Brandreth to Lord Byron's Corsair, who was then the literary hero of the hour. All was of no avail. Brandreth and two others were executed; twenty more were transported; the rest obtained a free pardon.

Among those who watched the public execution, carried out with all the old-fashioned barbarity, save for the quartering of the bodies, was Shelley. The scene aroused his violent indignation, and, in a most intemperate pamphlet, he contrasted the end of these misguided creatures with the death of the Princess Charlotte, wife of Prince Leopold and only daughter of the Regent, which had taken place on the previous day. This pamphlet was published anonymously, Shelley taking the nom-de-plume of "The Hermit of Marlow," and choosing for his motto, "We pity the plumage but forget the dying bird." In his concluding section the author declares that it is God who has slain the Princess, but man who has murdered Liberty. "Fetters heavier than iron weigh upon us, because they bind our souls. We move about in a dungeon more pestilential than damp and narrow walls, because the earth is its floor and the Heavens its roof. Let us follow the corpse of British Liberty slowly and reverentially to its tomb, and if some glorious phantom should appear, and make its throne of broken swords and sceptres and royal crowns trampled in the dust, let us say that the spirit of Liberty has risen from its grave, and left all that

was gross and mortal there, and kneel down and worship it as our Queen." The poet's indignation was not very well applied in this case, for Brandreth was nothing but a scatter-brained, violent revolutionary who committed a cold-blooded murder. His deluded victims, however—all, with one or two exceptions, agricultural labourers—demand our sympathy, which is intensified, rightly or wrongly, by the character of the Regent and his Ministers, and the infamous *agents provocateurs* whom they employed. The block on which Brandreth and the others were decapitated, after being cut down from the gallows, is still preserved in Derby gaol, and, according to tradition, the blood stains upon it have never dried. Such was the Pentrich Revolution, difficult to conjure up as we linger among these trim cottages. The last survivor of Brandreth's army—one of the pressed men who deserted after leaving Langley Mill—was a man named Booth, who died at Ripley in 1896 at the age of ninety-seven.

But it is time to be moving again. Leaving Pentrich Church we follow along the churchyard wall past the Post Office to a thatched cottage facing down the road. From here a cinder cart-track leads towards Coneygrey Farm, nearly a mile distant. Two fields away from the farm it crosses the line of the Ryknield Street, whose course may be traced at the foot of a meadow on the right in a deep and wide depression. A solitary and aged oak, no more than a hollow strip of bark with a few pathetic green leaves, seems to mark the further side of the ancient street. Maybe as a sapling, it saw men pass on the errands of peace and war along this once busy thoroughfare. The ruins of Wingfield Manor now begin to show on the crest of the rising ground across the valley, but before we dip down into the Chesterfield road again, the green hill by the wood side beyond the farm demands notice. No higher than the ridge, of which it forms the extremity, it is locally known as Castle Hill or Cannon Hill. The usual story is told of Cromwell planting his batteries upon it, but its military history goes

back far beyond the days of Cromwell, for it is unquestionably the site of a Roman Camp. It was the first station on the road from Derventio or Little Chester, just twelve miles distant.

From here we make our way to Wingfield Manor. A side lane running out of the Chesterfield road at our feet soon turns to the left at right angles, but there is no bridge over the Amber and the railway till one reaches the Wire Mill, which played its little part in the Pentrich Revolution. Despite its name, no wire was ever made there, and it is supposed that "wire" is a mistake for or corruption of "weir." That road is far round and, were it not trespass, it would be tempting to take the track through the gate—where the lane turns leftwards—passing from the fields under the railway and over the Amber by a single plank bridge, to where the path meanders through the mazes of a little wood. Then it emerges into a lane by the side of a farm just below Wingfield Manor.

Wingfield Manor, South front of South Court.

CHAPTER XXX

WINGFIELD MANOR: BESS OF HARDWICK

Wingfield Manor, one of the most fascinating of English ruins, has charm of situation—without any claim to exceptional beauty—charm of grace in the ruins themselves, and, above all, charm of association. It stands on the crest of a little hill, whose uneven mounds denote earthwork and entrenchment, favourably placed to command wide views, and, though the whole place is dismantled, it is not so far gone in decay as to need expert knowledge in order to recreate its past glories. To the professed archæologist a few exposed foundations or even the vague outline of confused mounds may be enough; we need more, and Wingfield Manor happily supplies it. The general plan of the building is easily made out. The entrance gateway opened upon a great quadrangle where the less important members of the household dwelt, and an archway in its north side led into a smaller but more stately quadrangle. A farmhouse now occupies the eastern half of

the buildings dividing the two quadrangles, while in the western half is the well-preserved High Tower, 72 ft. high. The great banqueting hall, 72 ft. by 36 ft., with a fine porch and octagon bay window, takes up the north-east angle of the northern quadrangle; the state apartments are in the middle, and the vast kitchens and butteries in the north-west corner. The rooms occupied by Mary Queen of Scots are said to have taken up the whole of the west side. The chief puzzle for antiquaries is to find the chapel. Beneath the hall, and of the same dimensions, is a spacious crypt, dimly lit, with vaulted roof supported by groined arches that rest on rows of octagon pillars.

The mansion was begun by Ralph, Lord Cromwell, Lord Treasurer in the reign of Henry VI., but he did not finish it, and the Manor was sold to the second Earl of Shrewsbury, who was killed in the battle of Northampton. Successive Talbots made Wingfield their home, and in Queen Elizabeth's time it was one of the chief seats of the powerful sixth Earl whom, with his Countess, we have already met at Tutbury, Buxton, and Chatsworth. He was here with Mary Queen of Scots in January, 1569, on his way to Tutbury from the north, and returned for a six months' stay in April of the same year. The Queen was taken seriously ill, and the physicians sent down from London reported that the place was unwholesome and insanitary. To this Shrewsbury retorted that the bad smells were due to "the continued festering and uncleanly order of her own folke." The Queen's lodgings were cleansed, in her absence, but she fell ill again on her return, and not until 1584 did she make another lengthy stay at Wingfield. It was then that young Anthony Babington, of Dethick, a few miles away, concocted the futile plot for Mary's escape and for the murder of Queen Elizabeth, which brought him, and thirteen others, to the scaffold in 1586. Anthony pleaded bitterly for dear life: —

"Most gratious Souvarigne, if either bitter teares, a pensive contrite harte ore any dutifull sighte of the wretched synner might work any pitty

in your royal brest, I would wringe out of my drayned eyes as much bloode as in bemoaninge my drery tragedye should lamentably bewayll my faulte, and somewhat (no doughte) move you to compassion. But since there is no proportione betwixte the qualitye of my crimes and any human commiseration, Showe, sweet Queene, some mirakle on a wretch that lyethe prostrate in your prison, most grivously bewaylinge his offence, and imploringe such comforte at your anoynted hands as my poor wives misfortunes doth begge, my childs innocence doth crave, my gyltless familye doth wishe and my heynous trecherye doth leste deserve. So shall your divine mersy make your glorye shyne as far above all princes, as my most horrible practices are more detestable among your best subjects, who lovinglye and happelye to governe I humbly beseeche the mercye Master himself to grante for his sweete Sonnes sake JESUS CHRISTE."

He might as well have asked mercy of a stone as of Elizabeth. Let us hope that Queen Mary spared at least a sigh for the last of the many gallant gentlemen who laid down their lives in her cause!

Wingfield Manor, however, has other memories than those of the Shrewsburys and the Queen of Scots. During the Civil War it played an important part—never more than local, it is true, yet still important. The estate on the death of the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury had passed, by the marriage of his eldest daughter, to the Earl of Pembroke, who garrisoned the house for the Parliament on the outbreak of the war. In December, 1643, the Earl of Newcastle captured it for the King after a twelve days' siege, and left a strong garrison in charge. This proved a sharp thorn in the side of the Parliament forces at Derby, for the Cavaliers raided over a wide area and cut off isolated posts and convoys. Eventually, therefore, Sir John Gell moved up to Wingfield, laid regular siege, and vowed he "would not desist till, if God so pleased, he had the place," which was described as "the Sanctuary of all the Papists and delinquents of that country." Sundry efforts were made for its relief. One detachment, two hundred strong, under Colonel Eyre, was captured in Boylstone Church, near Sudbury, by the Parliamentarians, who surrounded the building and took them all prisoners, one by

one, as they came out. Another force, under General Hastings, was driven back by the Earl of Denbigh and Sir John Gell. But the siege itself made little progress until the main Parliament army sent Sir John "four great peeces," capable of throwing thirty two pound balls, which managed to effect a breach. Then the garrison surrendered. Colonel Dalby, the officer in command, was treacherously shot at the entrance gate by a deserter, who thrust his musket through a loophole and fired point-blank.

In 1646 Wingfield Manor was dismantled, but the order for its destruction was not very faithfully obeyed, and the chief damage to the glorious old building was done in 1774 by one of the Haltons, into whose possession the estate had passed. He pulled down the entire western side of the north quadrangle to provide himself with ready-dressed stone. The elaborate dials, which still remain on some of the walls, were set up by Immanuel Halton, the mathematician, a century before. From the summit of the High Tower, fine prospects are obtainable over towards Crich Stand, Ambergate and Pentrich, but the most fascinating view of all is to look down on the grey ruins, the tottering smoke stacks, the roofless hall, the great vacant fireplaces, the kitchens, the outer walls of what was Queen Mary's prison, and the magnificent walnut tree which grows upon the site of her rooms.

Before we leave Wingfield Manor let us speak a little more fully of the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury who were, for so many years, Queen Mary's custodians. The post was a most thankless one, especially as the Earl was answerable to so imperious, capricious, and niggardly a mistress as Queen Elizabeth. Many causes had contributed to his selection. He was lord of Sheffield Castle and Sheffield Manor, Worksop Manor, Wingfield Manor, Rufford Abbey, Buxton Hall, and Tutbury Castle. His wife, the Countess, owned in her own right Chatsworth, Hardwick, Bolsover, and Oldcotes, in Derbyshire, and Welbeck Abbey, in Nottinghamshire. These all lay within

thirty miles of one another, and, therefore, if the captive needed change of air or residence, it could be obtained without difficulty. Moreover, Elizabeth, a shrewd judge of character, knew that Shrewsbury might be trusted implicitly to treat Mary with every courtesy, and yet be vigilant against intrigue. He belonged to the middle party in religion, had friends on both sides, and, though himself a Protestant, bore no ill-will to the Catholics. He was also rich, and Elizabeth could, therefore, stint him of proper maintenance, knowing that he was able to make good the deficit out of his own purse. Shrewsbury, naturally, grew unspeakably weary of a charge which completely deprived him of all liberty of movement and action, and he eventually laid down his duties with heartfelt relief. The stoutest partisans of Mary admit that he made a kindly and considerate jailer.

But in the eyes of posterity the Earl of Shrewsbury has been eclipsed by his second wife, the famous Bess of Hardwick, a woman of boundless ambition and unusual strength of character. Not for her the womanly ideal expressed by Pope in the lines,

> "She who ne'er answers till her husband cools
> And, though she rules him, never shows she rules."

Bess of Hardwick was cast in another mould – a mould very similar to that in which Queen Elizabeth had herself been cast. Or to take another, and perhaps closer parallel, Bess of Hardwick might have been twin-sister to that brimstone lady, Sarah Jennings, afterwards first Duchess of Marlborough.

She was the fourth daugher of a plain country squire, John Hardwick of Hardwick, near Ault Hucknall, the ruins of whose old mansion are still to be seen by the side of Hardwick Hall. Born in 1518, she married at the age of fourteen Robert Barlow of Barlow, a boy scarcely older than herself, who died in the following year and left to his girl widow all his estates. Why she remained unwed for the next sixteen years is not stated, but in 1549, when she was thirty-one, she became the

third wife of Sir William Cavendish, of Suffolk, and induced him to "sell his estates in the southern parts of England and purchase lands in Derbyshire where her kindred lived." We are expressly told by Bishop Kennett that this was done "at her desire," and we may suppose that Sir William was a very

Ault Hucknall Church.

uxorious and docile husband thus to uproot himself from his native soil. He bought the Chatsworth estate from the Agards and—again at his wife's instigation—began to build there a fine new mansion which, at his death in 1557, was uncompleted, and was finished by his widow at a total cost of £80,000. Three sons and three daughters were the issue of this union. Lady Cavendish next married a west-country

knight, Sir William St. Loe, who was one of the Queen's Captains of the Guard. In her marriage settlements she stipulated that all Sir William's estates should pass to herself and her heirs in default of issue of the marriage, and so, when he died, his children by his first wife were left without a shilling. Finally, in 1568, she made a fourth essay in matrimony, and this time, at the age of fifty, landed her biggest fish in the person of the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury. Again she made judicious terms before giving her coy consent. She insisted that her youngest daughter, Mary Cavendish, should marry the Earl's second son, Gilbert, and that her eldest son, Henry, should marry the Earl's youngest daughter, Lady Grace. By these two marriages she hoped to bind together the Talbot, Cavendish, and Hardwick interests, and not until these nuptials were solemnised would Bess of Hardwick give her hand to the Earl. For the first few years the marriage was a happy one. In 1573 we find the Earl writing to his wife as follows:—"Of all the joys I have under God, the greatest is yourself. To think that I possess one so faithful and one that I know loves me so dear is all and the greatest comfort that this earth can give. . . . Farewell, only joy." That was obviously no perfunctory duty letter, and in 1577 the Countess was also sending pretty messages to her husband, praying, "God send my jewel health."

The Countess, having attained the height of her own ambitions, now schemed for the advancement of her own children. She had a glorious opportunity in 1574. The old Countess of Lennox, mother of the Earl of Darnley, late husband of Mary Queen of Scots, was travelling north with her younger son Charles Stuart Earl of Lennox. They stayed at Rufford Abbey *en route* and were entertained by the Countess of Shrewsbury. The visit lasted no more than five days, but in that time the two match-making mothers entered into a compact that Lennox should marry Elizabeth Cavendish, another daughter of the Countess. The marriage took place clandes-

tinely—this time, we may suppose, it was the Countess who had to deal handsomely in the way of marriage settlements—and the only child of the union was the ill-fated Lady Arabella Stuart, who, if anything had happened to James, the only son of Queen Mary, would have been heiress to the thrones of England and Scotland.

We can imagine with what self-satisfaction the Countess would congratulate herself on having pushed her way to the very steps of the throne; we can imagine how nervously the Earl would apprehend the resentment of Queen Elizabeth; and we can imagine too the violent explosion of anger with which the Tudor Queen received the news. If she boxed proud Leicester's ears on one famous occasion, what would she have done had the Countess of Shrewsbury been handy, hardly able to conceal the smile of triumph on her shrewd, purposeful face. The Queen promptly ordered her presumptuous subject to the Tower, and furious letters rained in upon the unfortunate Earl, her husband, who was probably innocent of the whole intrigue and knew nothing of what was afoot until the wedding was over. He wrote to Burghley a pitiful, deprecatory letter, assuring him that it had been all his wife's doing, and that she was for ever scheming new marriages. "There are few noblemen's sons in England," he said, "that she hath not prayed me to deal for at one time or another. So I did for my Lord Rutland, with my Lord Sussex, for my Lord Wharton, and sundry others; and now this comes unlooked for, without thanks to me." Queen Elizabeth, recognising that the marriage was made and could not be unmade, soon released the Countess from the Tower, and during most of the next ten years the ambitious lady remained in the Midlands, helping her husband to take care of Queen Mary.

They were not years of undiluted happiness. In 1584 the Earl and his Countess were at open war. We find the former in the August of that year writing thus to Burghley:—"For as to my wife, she hath sought to impoverish me and to enrich

herself. She hath sought the ruin and decay of my power and posterity and to raise up her house and name into that honour. She hath sought my discredit and slander, in the face of the world, and albeit she hath a little changed the air, yet she doth carry the old mind which hath nothing now left to work upon but mine old carcase, whereof I do think she would make a sacrifice, if I should receive her again." This was a change indeed from the "Farewell, my only joy!" tone of a few years before! What was the cause? The gossips were talking freely in their ill-natured way of the relations between Queen Mary and Shrewsbury. The Countess herself lent some colour to this report by her reply to Queen Elizabeth on one occasion when she was asked how Queen Mary fared. "Madame!" was the reply, "she cannot do ill while she is with my husband, and I begin to grow jealous; they are so great together." Probably this was merely a jest, with a touch of malicious sarcasm to spice it, but a few years later, when the Earl and Countess had fallen out over other matters, the Countess began to spread scandalous reports of an intrigue between her husband and Queen Mary. The Scottish Queen was furious when they came to her ears. She wrote angry denials to Queen Elizabeth and turned the tables on the Countess of Shrewsbury by retailing all the discreditable stories which the Countess had told her about Queen Elizabeth herself. Those who read the letter will see that Queen Mary did not forget to embellish and embroider her narrative and make the very most of her material. But Queen Elizabeth took the sensible view that a *liaison* would not have escaped the sharp eyes of Bess of Hardwick in its earlier stages, and she evidently did not believe it. Nor need we. The gouty old Shrewsbury was not likely to attract Queen Mary; it was his fate—after he had quarrelled with his wife—to fall into the hands of an intriguing serving maid who ruled him with a rod of iron.

But let us leave old scandals! The real quarrel between Shrewsbury and his Countess was over money matters, and in

the end they separated, Shrewsbury thanking Queen Elizabeth for her graciousness in relieving him at last of "the two devils" who had made his life intolerable to him, his wife and his Royal prisoner. The Earl died in 1590 and was buried at Sheffield, where an interminable elegy of twenty-three verses was inscribed upon his tomb. Let us quote one only:

> "Soe great a trust as this so long was never seen,
> A subject for to be a keeper of a Queen,
> To scape out of his hands by divers ways she sought,
> But still he did prevent the ways that she had wrought."

The Countess survived him for seventeen years, living in great state at Hardwick, which she had inherited on the death of her brother. Here she built the famous Elizabethan mansion which has proved her most enduring monument. In her will she left £200 as a poor widow's mite, "to be bestowed of a cup of gold" for the acceptance of Queen Elizabeth. "To whose most excellent Majesty," she continued, "I make this most humble, earnest and last request that it would please her Highness to have compassion and to be good and gracious to my poor grandchild, Arabella Stuart, accordingly as her Majesty hath most graciously oftentimes said unto me that she would do for her poor orphan, now left only to depend upon her gracious Providence." To Arabella she left £1,000, a sable, most of her pearls and jewels, and "my christal glass framed with silver and gilt and set with Lapis Lazarus and Aggett." But the unfortunate Arabella never enjoyed her legacy, for in 1602 the old Countess changed her mind and cut her granddaughter and her own son, Henry Cavendish, bodily out of her will. She herself outlived her royal mistress and continued to build and scheme to the very end. Tradition says that she had been told she would never die so long as she went on building, and her death is reported to have taken place during a hard frost which kept her workmen idle. She was buried with great pomp in All Saints' Church at Derby, where she had set up her monument during her own lifetime. The long and

tedious inscription we will not transcribe, but we cannot omit two or three striking references to this masculine old lady of the sixteenth century. Bishop White Kennet, who compiled some memorials of the Cavendish family, says of her rather quaintly :— "On Nov. 18, 1590, she was a fourth time left, and to death continued, a widow. A change of conditions that perhaps never fell to any one woman, to be four times a creditable and happy wife, to rise by every husband into greater wealth and higher honours, to have an unanimous issue by one husband only, to have all those children live and all by her advice to be creditably disposed of in her life time, and after all to live seventeen years a widow in absolute power and plenty." Thomas Hobbes, who found a hole through which to creep out of the world at Hardwick and is buried in Hucknall Church, and whose patron, the Earl of Devonshire, was a descendant of Bess of Hardwick, says of her in his Latin poem *De Mirabilibus Pecci*,

> "*At quota pars ea laudis Elizae*
> *Salopicae? quae multa et magna palatia struxit,*
> *Magnas divitias, magnamque bonamque paravit*
> *Famam, quae magnos sibi conciliavit amicos*
> *Ornavitque humiles. Multam, magnamque reliquit*
> *Prolem qua regio late nunc usque beatur.*"

Yet another panegyrist was one William Sampson, who in a little volume of elegies entitled *Vivit Post Funera Virtus*, published in 1636, has a longish poem dedicated to the memory of Bess of Hardwick. He speaks of her as

> "This blest Eliza, this bright diamond
> Which long time grew upon our Peakish stronde."

and says very truly that "like a Queen, she long lived in the North." With distinctly less truth he praises her for being

> "Free from ambition or thoughts to aspire,
> Yet was her temper all celestial fire."

To this the Earl, her husband, would have entered a demurrer,

though he might well have said "Amen"—had he been alive to say it—to Sampson's quaint valedictory address :—

> "Rest, sweete Eliza ; again I say goe rest,
> Sleepe with the Phœnix in thy spycie nest."

One more reference—this time from the pen of that cynical man of the world, Horace Walpole. In his folio copy of Collins' *Historical Collections*—now in the British Museum—he wrote in the broad margin, opposite an account of Bess of Hardwick, the following set of verses. We omit the first four, rather *scabreux*, lines describing her four marriages and the way she secured every shilling that had belonged to each of her husbands :—

> "Sad was the Dame, but not dejected,
> Five stately mansions she erected,
> With more than royal pomp, to vary
> The prison of her captive Mary.
> When Hardwick's towers shall bow the head,
> Nor Mass be more in Worksop said,
> When Bolsover's fair frame shall tend,
> Like Oldcoates, to its destined end,
> When Chatsworth knows no Candish bounties
> Let Fame forget this costly Countess."

Walpole also notes that she had an income of £60,000 a year, and that her estates in his day brought in £200,000. That was more than a century ago. Their present annual value—owing to the minerals which have been found, and the growth of important townships upon them—must be incalculably more. A word as to her descendants ! She was, as we have said, the daughter of a Derbyshire squire, well-to-do, no doubt, but still a squire and no more. Yet among her grandchildren were the Earl of Devonshire, the Earl of Newcastle, the Earl of Kingston, Sir Charles Cavendish, Lady Arabella Stuart, the Countess of Pembroke, the Countess of Arundel and the Countess of Kent, while her great grandchildren included Viscount Mansfield, Viscount Newark and Lord Martrevers. Bess of Hardwick

was thus the ancestress of the three ducal families of Devonshire, Newcastle, and Kingston, and of Earls and Barons by the score.

Hardwick Hall—the sole survivor of this stately lady's many new mansions —was begun in 1590 and finished in 1597. It is beautifully situated, almost midway between Mansfield and Chesterfield, on the crest of a hill in a spreading park, and is in shape a parallelogram, surmounted by six towers, each a hundred feet high, with the initials of the Countess, E.S.

Hardwick Hall.

repeated frequently in the battlements. The Hall has a frontage of 209 feet and looks to be all window set in a frame of stone, this predominance of glass giving rise to the couplet, "Hardwick Hall, More glass than wall." What was once a magnificent stone-flagged entrance court was partially converted into flower-beds and shrubberies half a century ago. Hardwick is principally famous for its almost unique tapestries, for its noble state apartments, which retain their ancient furniture, and for a number of singularly interesting portraits of the Cavendish family and of the Kings and Queens of England. The Hard-

wick portrait of Mary Queen of Scots is justly celebrated, and many examples of the Scottish Queen's needlework embroidery are to be seen in the room which bears her name, despite the fact that the Hall was not begun until some years after her death. The older Hardwick Hall, now in picturesque, ivy-clad ruin, was inhabited for a century after the completion of the new mansion, the reason being that so much space had been allotted to the great galleries and state apartments that there was insufficient accommodation for the large household when the family was in residence. The old Norman church of Ault Hucknall, where Hobbes lies buried under a plain black marble slab—"The Philosopher's Stone" he had called it with sportive irony a few days before his death—lies on the borders of Hardwick Park.

CHAPTER XXXI

ASHOVER AND OLD BRAMPTON

After seeing Wingfield Manor, nothing in South Wingfield need detain us. The Hall at the foot of the ancient ruin is plain and ugly. It was an act of vandalism to tear down the old masonry of the manor; the enormity was doubled when the stones which had formed part of so gracious a design were constrained to house the chief vandal himself. Nor does the village make amends, where the modern builder has been busy with his bricks and slates and his rows of dreary cottages. We are not sorry, therefore, to take to the fields again and follow a long footpath which in a mile leads us out near Wessington Green, another forlorn place, with a modern church, built at the side of a breezy, if rather dishevelled, common. Crich Stand is still a prominent feature in the landscape, and the towers and chimney stacks of Wingfield Manor show boldly against the sky. Our way lies through fields which gain in beauty as we leave Wessington behind. On our right is a long parallel ridge; the Chesterfield road runs along its crest, keeping, from just below the church tower of Shirland, to the line of the Ryknield Street. At the foot of the ridge is the railway, the main Midland route from Ambergate and Birmingham to Sheffield and the north, but we see only the white smoke of the passing trains. On our left are the lofty hill of Highoredish, throwing a rounded green spur down to the plain, and the heights of Dethick Common, while ahead of us is an alluring

landscape of green hills and pastures with the tall chimneys of Littlemoor in the far distance.

A mile from Wessington Green we quit the fields by the side of Brackenfield Church, standing at the cross roads away from its village. It is barely half a century old, but not until 1858 did Brackenfield become a separate parish. It had been part of the parish of Morton—three miles away over the ridge to the east—and an ancient chapel of the Holy Trinity stood high up under the hill, more than a mile to the west of the present church. When the latter was built, the old chapel was allowed to fall into ruinous decay, though part of the fabric dates from the end of the fifteenth century. Most of the old oak was used for firewood, and only in 1878 were the rood screen and two of the surviving pews rescued and moved down into the new church. They now stand disconsolately at the west end; but it is intended soon to set up the screen, which bears the arms of the Willoughbys and Bradbournes, in its rightful position on the chancel step.

Up the hill, past the village green and school, we come to a place where four roads meet. Here is a large stone built into a wall, bearing the initials S.M. and a spurious date. The spot is marked on the Ordnance map as Mather's Grave, but it is usually spoken of locally as Mathergrave, and has given its lugubrious name to a neighbouring farm. People whom I questioned on the road told me that one Samuel Mather had cut his wife's throat and committed suicide, and had then been buried at the cross roads as a *felo de se*. Later inquiries brought to light a different story. From the old parish registers of Morton it appears that in 1716 Samuel Mather of Brackenfield had an illegitimate daughter and the child became chargeable to the rates. Rather than face the scandal, Mather committed suicide in an old barn, about a hundred yards from the present vicarage. There is no warrant for the statement that he had the guilt of murder on his conscience. Local tradition also relates that the suicide was drawn to his grave

by two bullocks, and that, while the animals rested on the way, an ill-omened raven flew down and settled on the corpse. The episode of the raven looks like the usual rustic embroidery on an original legend. Some years ago, when the highway was widened, the bones of the suicide were found and were re-interred beneath the wall which bounds the cottage garden hard by.

Several cross-roads up and down the Derbyshire countryside are pointed out, where, according to local tradition, some unhappy wretch, who has taken his own life with full knowledge, lies interred without Christian rites. So late as 1838 a man named Thomas Bagshawe, of Hazlebadge, near Bradwell, was thus buried. Sometimes there was the added barbarity of a stake driven through the body, a crude indignity only abolished a century ago by 4 George c. 52, when it was ordered that a *felo de se* should be buried within twenty-four hours of the verdict of the coroner's inquest, in unconsecrated ground and in the dark hours between nine o'clock and midnight. Public opinion has undergone a marked change with respect to suicide—though to what extent the old feeling of horror has been modified we will not attempt to say. But coroners' juries are certainly not so ready as once they were to deny the suicide Christian burial. Unless a man has committed some dastardly crime before he takes his own life, they display generous reluctance to brand him as a *felo de se*.

But this is a melancholy theme. Let us turn back down the road a little way till we come to a lane on our left hand that leads to some cottages and a farmyard, and continue through the meadows at the foot of the green hill below Higoredish. Far away to the right over a dip in the ridge we see a new spire springing skywards—it is that of Clay Cross church. Keeping up whenever there is a choice of paths, we at length enter the Ashover Road and, after dipping down through a wooded dell, find ourselves in an absolutely different scene. A new ridge has arisen on our right out of the plain, while on the

left the hills show the curving sweep that usually denotes wild moor above. The ridge is Ashover Hay, a fantastic eminence climbing to seven hundred feet, and, as we shall see better when we get to Ashover, shaped like a whale's back. A few farmhouses are seen on the Hay--the word simply means hill—and, in the days of the Great Plague, death was busy in this remote hamlet and claimed many victims. But no Mompesson dwelt on Ashover Hay and the details have been long forgotten. As we follow the road the hills on our left assume a bolder curve and form a fine amphitheatre. The edge nearest to us is Drakelow; midway the farms of Ravensnest give their name to the heights above them; while at the farthest end is Cocking Tor, whose slopes are covered in places with the *débris* of old lead mines. These mines, which have not been worked for a century, were once among the richest in Derbyshire, and brought their owner in thirty years a fortune of £120,000.

On Ashover Common, above the Cocking Tor, you may find a rocking stone, called Robin Hood's Mark, about 26 ft. in circumference, and another oddly shaped rock, called the Turning Stone, once fondly believed to be a rock idol. They now attract little attention. The name of Cocking Tor, by the way, seems to be dying out through the unhappy mischance that the outline of a portion of the hill is supposed to resemble Mr. Gladstone's nose. Among the trees below stands Overton Hall, once the residence of Sir Joseph Banks. The old scientist was still alive when Rhodes wrote his *Peak Scenery* and remarked in his quaint way: "From the elevated situation this distinguished individual held, both in science and literature and the place he occupied in the estimation of the public, I frankly confess that so long as he was sojourning among us, I could neither pass his house in London in Soho-square, or his residence at Overton, without a feeling of veneration for his character." Do people still honour the name of the naturalist who accompanied Captain Cook on his first voyage round the

world, in the *Endeavour*, a journey which then took three years? Banks was President of the Royal Society from 1777 to his death in 1820, and his fine house in Soho-square was the gathering place of scientists from all parts of the world. But he has been resting for more than eighty years in his grave in Westminster Abbey, and memories are short save for the very greatest. We soon drop down to a bridge over the Amber, here in its pretty infancy—it rises three miles away in the hills—and then the road divides again, forking up either side of the Ashover valley. As we keep to the right, the valley spreads out, rising on our side with gentle ascent through pleasant meadows, to a low edge; while on the left a rolling hill hides from sight the high ridge behind it.

Ashover, charmingly situated and one of the pleasantest of the small market towns of Derbyshire, is remote from the railway—in these days to be three miles from a station is to be remote—nor are the trains likely to approach more nearly. It lies at the head of a valley from which there is no exit at the upper end save by surmounting a steep hill, and it means a toilsome climb to reach the summit of the Chesterfield and Matlock Road. The only place of consequence lying in the triangle of which Chesterfield, Ambergate and Rowsley are the points, it retains the charm of being neither town nor village, but a curious blend of both. It is to be seen at its best from the ridge which, at the town end, bears the odd name of "The Fabric." The explanation generally given is that the hill was the common property of the people of Ashover, who had the right to quarry there for stone for their dwelling-houses, and drew therefrom the stone for the church. Lands left in trust for Church purposes were sometimes called Fabric Lands, because they provided either material or revenue *ad fabricam reparandam*, and so "The Fabric" is thought to be a sort of "Church Hill." But such derivations are always doubtful.

Be that as it may, those who make the easy ascent to the

ridge behind the big castellated house on the slope will be rewarded with a fine view, for the ridge really is a ridge, and a wide expanse of goodly land lies outstretched on the further side. The view extends across the noble woods of Wingerworth to Chesterfield in the north-east; due east over Clay Cross to Hardwick and—between Hardwick and Chesterfield—over the chimneys of Temple Normanton to Bolsover Castle. A pleasant prospect, yet the Ashover valley holds the eye the longest, as we look towards Ashover Hay and see how its rounded back loses from this distance all its sharpness of form, or as we admire again the noble sweep of the hills above the Ravensnest farms, and follow their outline along to the quarries and the place where the Matlock road is lost to sight. Below among the trees is the ivy-clad fragment—a tower and a few rooms—of Eastwood Hall, once the big house of the neighbourhood and successively the home of the Pleasleys, the Willoughbys and the Reresbys. The last Reresby to live there was a Sir Thomas, who had been High Sheriff for the county in 1613, and had followed the prevailing fashion of the day in the matter of wasteful expenditure, for, in order to pay his debts and provide portions for his daughters, he was compelled to sell the Hall and the advowson of Ashover Church. These were bought in 1623 by the Rev. Immanuel Bourne, who had the grievous mortification to see his home blown up by a detachment of Roundheads during the Civil War. He made what proved a very bad speculation when he purchased Eastwood Hall.

There is still extant a letter which this unfortunate squire and parson wrote in 1646 to a cousin at Manchester, describing the misfortunes which had come upon him. When the war broke out in 1642 the Rector of Ashover tried to keep strictly neutral. But neutrals have no place when civil war is afoot; the non-combatant is freely plundered by both sides. On the King's side especially an utter lack of discipline prevailed. The troops sacked and looted, like soldiers of fortune

in an enemy's country, and good royalists suffered just as severely as the most malignant crop heads. In the same way, in the American War of Independence, British Generals allowed their Hessians to plunder loyalist homesteads and outraged the feelings of their only friends. Bourne describes for us the conduct of a detachment of fifty "dragooners" sent by Sir Francis Wortley to Ashover in order to watch the Chesterfield road, lest Sir John Gell or Colonel Hutchinson from Nottingham should attempt a surprise. Their instructions were "to keepe a look out towards Nottinghamshire, and also, as usual, to collect benevolence"—in other words, to levy blackmail. Bourne writes as follows:—

"These men, on coming here, did take up their quarters at Eddlestone, but as Sir John Pershall was away at his other house in Staffordshire, they obtained no benevolences from him, but they lived at free quarters and there was great slaughter of pigs and sheep and fowles. They also did drink all the wine and ale in his cellars. They then, drunken and mad, did come down to the town, and did do the same at the alehouses, but Job Wall withstood them in the doorway and told them they should have no drink in his house, they having had too much already; but they forsoothed him, and did turn him out and set a watch at the doors till all the ale was drunk or wasted. They then came to me, and to Dakin and to Hodgkinson, and demanded ten pounds from each for the King's use and also smaller sums from the farmers and myners; and when we did beg them to be content with less they swore we were Roundheads and enemies to the King, and, if we did not pay, they should burn our houses about our ears, which I believe they would have done, and we were glad to pay."

Eddlestone, or Edlestow as it is now spelt, the spot where these royalist ruffians were stationed, lies about half a mile from the Chesterfield main road on the hill side above Slack. They did not remain there long, for they were withdrawn as soon as Sir Francis Wortley heard that Sir John Gell was near Chesterfield in superior force. Then Ashover received a visit from a local Parliamentarian named White, of Milltown, who had obtained a captaincy of dragoons. He came with his troop and told the Rev. Immanuel that as he had been able to pay ten pounds to the King, he would now have to find twenty for the cause of

God and the Parliament. The rector says he did not "feel inclined to pay so much money to such a mean fellow" and threatened to write to his superiors and betters. Whereat "he replied with an impudent face that he had no betters, and that if I did not pay the money he would take all my cattel in part payment, and do the same with all the others; so at last we payed him and were right glad to get rid of such a knave." Again the tide of war turned, and the Earl of Newcastle came to Chesterfield. This meant the retirement of Sir John Gell and the King's men were once more in the ascendant, who "like demons, destroyed all they came near, and left the poor to starve." Can one wonder that "this wilful waste and destruction made the King many enemies, and hundreds now joined Sir John, either for revenge or to keep from starving"? The rector himself, when the royal cause began to look hopeless, complied with the ordinances of the Parliament, cast aside his surplice, gave over praying for King Charles, and even accepted the appointment of Commissioner of Sequestration, hoping thereby, as he frankly admitted, to "soften some of the hard measures dealt out to the King's friends." But his time-serving stood him in little stead. The Royalists regarded him as a traitor; the thorough-going Parliamentarians said he was a "malignant in disguise."

Then in 1646 came the blow which he had been so anxious to avert. The decree went forth that Eastwood Hall should be demolished. An old servant of the rector heard the order given and privately warned him to move as much of his belongings as he could to a place of safety. This he did, and transferred it to the old rectory, but with such haste that "great destruction was made of the beautiful carved furniture I bought with the hall." The very next day a company of dragoons came riding over from Wingfield Manor, which had just been laid in ruins, and their Muster-Master demanded possession of Eastwood Hall in the name of the High Court of Parliament. Bourne had no means of resistance, and contented himself with a protest.

"I told them that I had done nothing against Parliament, and that I was holding office under their Highnesses at the time, and that I should bring their conduct before either Fairfax or Col. Hutchinson; but they replied with all civility that they had orders from their commanding officer to destroy the hall, and that he had also said that he would not leave a nest in the countrie where a malignant could hyde his head. They, however, offered to assist in removing anything I set store by. I now found that they had brought three small pieces of ordnance which they drew up to the top of the Feebrick and discharged them at the hall, but the cannons being small (only two drakes and one suker) they did no harm beyond breaking the windows and knocking off the corners of the walls, and they soon tyred and set the pyoneers to work, but the walls being thick and the mortar good, they made little progress, till at last growing impatient they did put a barrel of powder in the tower and at once destroyed more than half the hall and left the other in ruins, so that it cannot be repaired."

Such was the end of Eastwood Hall as a residence. When the Roundheads had finished their work of destruction they sang a hymn—one of exultation, doubtless—and marched down to the church at Ashover. The rector followed—just allowing them to get a discreet distance ahead—and found to his great surprise that Scout-Master Smedley was in the pulpit, where he preached a sermon two hours long against Popery, priestcraft, and kingcraft. "But Lord," continued the rector, "what stuff and nonsense he did talke, and if he could have murdered the Kyng as easily as he did the Kyng's English, the war would long since have been over." When the sermon was done, and the troop was preparing to set off, some one drew attention to the old stained-glass windows representing the Crucifixion. Mattocks and bars were brought, and the windows and the stone work broken to fragments. Then they ransacked the vestry, and finding a few prayer books and the parish registers, they made a bonfire with them in the market place, and rode away singing another psalm. The rector, to whom we owe this interesting account of the wanton mischief wrought in Ashover during a long summer day, survived his misfortunes for many years. He died and was buried in Leicestershire. Thus he has no monument in Ashover Church, though there is one

to his son Obadiah, who succeeded him as patron and rector, and there are many other memorials of his descendants, of his name and the name of Nodder.

The church, alike inside and out, is of great interest, and its graceful tapering spire enjoys as much local fame as the spire of Ashbourne. Tradition says that it was originally built by the

Ashover Church.

Babingtons of Dethick, who were connected by marriage with the Reresbys. The Babington arms are found on the ancient rood screen; there are Babington tombs and brasses, and there was once a Babington chantry chapel. The finest of the monuments is the alabaster tomb containing the effigies of Thomas Babington and his wife Edith, a sister of Sir Anthony Fitzherbert of Norbury, the celebrated judge. In the chancel are two good brasses, but I like best the simple tablet "To the

memory of David Wall, whose superior performance on the bassoon endeared him to an extensive acquaintance. His social life closed on the 4th of December, 1796, in his 57th year." His "superior performance!" Ashover was not jealous of David's fame but proud of him, and vaunted him, no doubt, to Chesterfield and Derby folks who strayed that way. Bassoon players are happier in this respect than prophets. But note that whatever hopes David entertained of joining the angelic quire, he did not expect convivial music. He counted his "social life" as closed, and quitted with a sigh "the warm precincts of the cheerful day" and night. On the south side is a handsome tablet to one Francis Parkes, born at Knott Cross in Ashover parish, who in 1713 died in Nottingham at the age of thirty-nine. "He by his natural genius and great industry became a wonderful proficient in the politer art of painting." What does the comparative degree signify? Probably nothing more than that Parkes painted portraits of the people who moved in the best society in Nottingham. The politer art of painting is thus the art of painting the politer people! Outside in the churchyard are several tombstones of interest; we will quote from one only, a good variant upon a very hackneyed theme.

"Reader stand and shed a tear,
Think on the dust
That slumber here,
And as thou reads
The state of me,
Think of the glass
That run for thee."

The grammar may be faulty, but there is no mistaking the barbed edge of this Parthian arrow.

Ashover Church has a rare leaden font, decorated with twenty curious figures, each book in hand, excellent material for bullets which the Roundheads were blind to overlook. Ashover also at one time possessed an unique treasure in its

parish clerk, a certain Leonard Wheatcroft, who cried "Amen" to the Rev. Immanuel Bourne in the critical days of the Civil War. He wrote an account of his own adventures with a running commentary on things in general, and by great good fortune the manuscript has managed to survive. It was recently printed in the *Derbyshire Archæological Journal*. Wheatcroft was a bit of a poet—"he makes rhymes about almost everything," wrote his rector—and his lines, though the sheerest doggerel, had sometimes a swing which helped to carry them off. Here are a few on the destruction of Eastwood Hall:—

> "The Roundheads came down upon Eastwood Old Hall,
> And they tried it with mattock and tried it with ball,
> And they tore up the leadwork and splintered the wood,
> But as firmly as ever the battlements stood;
> Till a barrel of powder at last did the thing,
> And then they sung psalms for the fall of the King."

While Leonard Wheatcroft was parish clerk, an Ashover woman, named Dorothy Mately, was swallowed up by the earth to the exceeding edification of John Bunyan and his friends. Bunyan tells the story in *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, and, as no one could tell a story better, let me give it in his own words:—

"This Dorothy Mately was noted by the people of the town to be a great swearer and curser and liar and thief, just like Mr. Badman, and the labour she did follow was to wash the rubbish that came forth of the lead mines and there to get sparks of lead ore. Her usual way of asserting things was with these kinds of imprecations—'I would I might sink into the earth if it be not so,' or, 'I would GOD would make the earth open and swallow me up.' Now, upon the 23rd March, 1660, this Dorothy was washing of ore upon the top of a steep hill, about a quarter of a mile from Ashover, and was there taxed by a lad for taking two single pence out of his pocket, for he had laid his breeches by and was working in his drawers, but she violently denied it, wishing the earth might swallow her up if she had them. Now one George Hodgkinson, of Ashover, a man of good report there, came accidently by where this Dorothy was and stood awhile to talk to her as she was washing ore. There stood also a little girl by her tub side, and another at a distance from her calling aloud to her to come away; where-

fore the said George took the girl by the hand and led her away to her that called her: but behold they had not gone ten yards away from Dorothy, but they heard her crying aloud for help. So, looking back, he saw the woman and her tub and sieve twirling round and sinking through the ground. Then said the man, "Pray to GOD to pardon thy sin, for thou art like never to be seen alive any longer." So she and her tub twirled round and round till they sunk three yards into the earth, and there for a while stayed. Then she called for help, thinking, as she said, she could stay there. Now the man, though greatly amazed, did begin to think which way to help her; but immediately a great stone which had appeared in the earth, fell upon her head and broke her skull, and then the earth broke in upon her and covered her. She was afterwards digged up, with the boy's two single pence in her pocket, but the tub and sieve could not be found."

Evidently Dorothy was plying her wash-tub on dangerous ground, where the miners had been excavating the limestone for lead ore. But Bunyan, and all the seriously minded folk of Ashover, regarded the fate of Dorothy Mately as a punishment similar to that which overtook Sapphira.

We quit Ashover by the road that mounts the hill to Kelstedge, where it joins the main highway from Matlock to Chesterfield, and runs tolerably straight for two miles across a windy plateau to the hamlet of Spitewinter. In another half mile we reach a large quarry on the highest ground of Stone Edge, where a desolate road turns leftwards across the wilds of Beeley Moor ere it drops down to Rowsley. Here our road dips, affording a delightful view of the exquisitely wooded valley in which Wingerworth lies. Chesterfield is only four miles further on, but we take a by-road on the left to Holymoorside, on the brook Hipper, and then bear rightwards up into the new road from Chesterfield to Baslow. Opposite the junction of the roads a stone stile gives access to an ancient church path, flagged for much of the way, and then changing into a delightful grassy lane which brings us out close to the church of Old Brampton, so called to distinguish it from New Brampton – practically a suburb of Chesterfield—which lies to the south-east. Old Brampton Church is not much visited,

yet it has several points of interest, notably the sculptured effigies on the outside walls, and a curious sepulchral stone, in the shape of a coffin, inside the building. Within a deeply cut quatrefoil at the top is the half-length figure of a woman, holding her heart in her hands, while at the lower end of the stone the toes are just showing. The middle is covered with an inscription in Lombardic capitals, giving the lady's name as Matilda la Caus, heiress of the family who in the thirteenth century were lords of the manor of Brampton. The slab was found in 1801, while a grave was being dug in the churchyard. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the leading people of the district were the Clarkes of Somersall, to whom, in 1673, an omnibus monument was put up, concluding with some Latin elegiacs on the familiar theme that without death there can be no life.

"*Far, vitae humanum fulcrum, non nascitur agris*
Intereat semen ni cereale prius,
Vivitur ex letho, viventia cuncta vicissim
Orbe in terrestri corripit Orcus atrox.
Nulla nisi in caelo sincera est vita benigno
Qui vivit moritur, qui moriturque ζάει."

This tablet is adorned with two gaudy and golden-haired females grasping gilt trumpets—in quite the worst style of late Stuart sepulchral ornament. Another Clarke monument is to the memory of Sir Godfrey Clarke of Chilcote, who married Lady Catherine Stanhope, daughter of the Earl of Chesterfield. He was a Member of Parliament—*non semel electus*—and a fine old Tory, for his great political principle, as his epitaph sets out in all the majesty of capital letters, was to restore to King, Church, and State what belonged to each.

"*Id unice prospexit*
Et pro virili contendit,
Ut in omni re salva essent et
REDDERENTUR
Regi, Ecclesiae, Reipublicae
QUAE SUNT SUA."

The emphasis on the word "restore" tells us plainly enough that Sir Godfrey was a Jacobite and drank to the king over the water. He died in 1734, and as it was not considered politic to defy King George too openly even on a tombstone, this was evidently the ingenious way adopted to show that Sir Godfrey died as he had lived—a partisan of the White Cockade.

The village of Old Brampton, whose chief distinction is to have been the birthplace of Thomas Linacre, the true founder of the College of Physicians and one of the first teachers of Greek in England, lies on an ancient highway which has been robbed of most of its traffic by the later road that runs to the south of it through New Brampton, and keeps a parallel course never much more than a mile distant. Old Brampton itself is about six hundred feet above sea level, but we rise to nearly a thousand feet just beyond the cross-roads, at the summit of Pudding-pie Hill some three miles on. Then we reach Bleak House, an aptly named homestead standing in a fork of the road and partly hidden by trees, through which the wind whistles shrilly through the long winter nights. Here the road divides. The older branch turns rightward across the moor, and soon narrows to a cart track with broad green spaces on either side. This was the old highway between Chesterfield and Manchester, which dropped down into the Derwent Valley by the side of Curbar Edge, and traces of its ancient consequence may be seen in the two tall road-stones set up on the grass. The date 1743 appears on one of them, and chiselled on its four sides are the directions, Bakewell Road, Chesterfield Road, Dronfield Road, and Middleton Road. Evidently, therefore, it stood just here at the cross-roads—the way to Bakewell lying through Baslow, and the lane to Dronfield turning up to the right at right angles in a direction almost due north.

We take the leftward branch, and desolate as our road has been from Old Brampton, its desolation deepens as we go forward, with little prospect at all on the right hand and wastes of dark moorland on the left. A mile from Bleak

House it crosses the Blackleach Brook and then swerves down to the left towards Gibbet Moor. Nor was that evil name given without a cause. Long ago, so the story runs, while a woman was frying some bacon one day in her cottage by the moor side a tramp came to the door. He asked for food; she said she had none to give to him. He pointed to the frying pan; the woman retorted that she was not cooking bacon for idle folks like him. Thereupon the ruffian attacked her, knocked her down, and in blind fury poured the boiling grease from the frying pan down her throat, scalding her to death. The miscreant was sentenced to be hanged alive in chains by the cottage door where his victim had lived, and there the gibbet was set up. He was long in dying -it is said that a passing traveller took mercy on him and gave him food—and his screams, as he swung on his gibbet, were so piercing that they disturbed the peace of the lord of Chatsworth in his house over the hill. Thenceforward, the legend adds, no criminal was ever gibbeted alive in Derbyshire.

We have been steadily making for a group of fantastic rocks at the edge of Gibbet Moor, but, just as we draw near, the moor recedes, and on our right hand there opens out the striking line of Birchen Edge, with the Nelson Monument at its further extremity. In the gap right ahead of us, as our road begins to fall, we notice the familiar outline of Longstone Edge and the ridges beyond, and quickly descend into the tiny hamlet of Robin Hood, so named from the hero who swaggers gloriously on the signpost of the thatched inn. Just below we join the new Chesterfield road, and an iron milepost soon tells us that Baslow is only a mile further on. Nor is the news unwelcome, for even those who love most the bleakness of a high moorland road will be grateful for the trees which now greet their eyes, and for the sure promise of a fair valley afforded by every forward step they take, till the road joins the big Sheffield highway just by the entrance gates of Chatsworth Park. These gates are little used now; they were built at a time when the

nearest railway station to Chatsworth was Chesterfield, and there seemed no likelihood of the railroad coming nearer. When the line up the Derwent Valley was extended from Ambergate to Rowsley, the Beeley entrance to Chatsworth Park naturally came into greater use. Crossing the Bar Brook, we find ourselves once more in the delightful village of Baslow.

CHAPTER XXXII

AMBERGATE TO CROMFORD: THROUGH THE VIA GELLIA: WINSTER AND STANTON MOOR

From the triangular station at Ambergate, built high in air in what, until the railway spoilt it, was the romantic meeting-place of the Amber and the Derwent, let us descend to the cross-roads and start on our way to Cromford. Seen from the level ground, the station becomes simply a hideous deformity, and the adjoining kilns of Bullbridge throw up fleecy masses of white clouded smoke. Our road soon crosses the Amber and we enter the valley of the Derwent at the true southern gate of the Peak. The river lies on our left hand; on the right the railroad runs in a half sunken track, hidden by a canopy of trees. Beyond it is the silent canal. There is just room enough for these three and for the road and a meadow; then the hills to right and left. In three-quarters of a mile, a deep recess in the woods on the left hand makes space for a mill, high above whose chimneys the woods extend, with a fringe of pines outlining the summit, and crowning a dense mass of luxuriant foliage of oak, elm and ash. No mill could stand in a more exquisite valley; no chimney could declare more eloquently the ruthlessness of industrial man. These woods are the remains of a great forest, called Duffield Frith, which stretched from Duffield to Wirksworth, and became the property of the Crown when the estates of Earl Ferrers were confiscated. Half a mile further on the Derwent begins to wind: the hills dip on either side, and the meadows between us and the river contract and then grow wide again. Looking back, we can see

that the high ground on our right, Crich Chase, is just as finely wooded as the Shiningcliff Wood on our left, though it was hidden from our view. Then we reach Whatstandwell station, below the road climbing up to Crich, and facing the woods of Alderwasley, which overhang the solid three-arched bridge that here spans the Derwent. Here amid the trees are the escarpments of rock which gave the Midland Railway engineers such a fright a few years back, when they feared a landslide.

It is a very pretty reach, and the little stony village of Holloway is set in the further corner of the hill from which a rounded spur descends to the stream. Beyond the spur the woods rise gloriously again, and we enter the little valley of Lea Hurst. Crich Stand has come into view to dominate the scene, but it is the valley which draws the eye. It has not, indeed, escaped scot-free. As usual there is the *amari aliquid*—a glaring pumping station in red brick. Lea Hurst, however, is famed for more than its beautiful scenery, for in the wood opposite to us stands an ancient stone house with many gables, the early Derbyshire home of Miss Florence Nightingale, "the lady with the lamp," and the gentle heroine of the hospitals of Scutari. Just beyond we enter on the broad dale which extends to Cromford. It is unsatisfactory work comparing one beauty spot with another, or even one stretch of road scenery with another. But if you take the great main roads of England—real highways of traffic like the road we have been travelling on—very few can show a more delightful, varied or better wooded five miles than the road from Ambergate to Cromford. It has no sensational features, nothing at any one point to call for rapturous superlatives, but it is more than pleasant going all the way. However, avoid it on a summer Saturday or Sunday, for then every speck of dust on the road is set dancing by multitudes of traps and cycles and motors, and you that have come to bless will stay to curse.

Cromford was the earliest centre of the cotton industry in England, as revolutionised by the mechanical inventions of Richard Arkwright. Arkwright was not a Derbyshire man; he was born at Preston in Lancashire, and spent his early days as a barber and wig-maker in Bolton, until he invented the spinning jenny, which laid the foundations of his fame and fortune, and created a gigantic industry in face of bitter opposition from threatened monopolies. He set up in 1771 his first mill at Cromford, which still survives, though for some years it has ceased to spin cotton. The Cromford Mills may be seen without trespass from the wide entrance gates. In the left-hand corner is the big wheel. It revolves no longer, though a thin stream of water is still carried into the mill by an aqueduct from across the road, and falls into a circular basin in the spacious court-yard before it is conveyed away underground. Opposite the entrance a limestone cliff towers above the mill buildings and tall trees wave above the rock. The buildings are of irregular shape and vary in height from three to five storeys. One large block was burnt down a few years ago. Cromford Mills ceased to be devoted to their original purposes when the great cotton combine was formed; they are now divided between a brewery, a corn mill, and a steam laundry. Arkwright was knighted in 1786 on the occasion of his presenting an address to George III., and survived his dignity for six years. He never dwelt at Willersley, the big house on the other side of the Derwent which he began to build shortly before his death. Indeed, it was no sooner finished than it was burnt to the ground, and had to be built anew.

Cromford itself is a straggling place, with irregular clusters of houses scattered upon the steep hillsides and bearing that indefinable stamp of operatives' dwellings which is characteristic of so many Lancashire towns. Whether of brick or stone —these all create the same impression. Their austere severity and ugliness suggest that the builder's one idea has been to hasten the construction of as many as possible, careless

whether those who are to dwell in them will be comfortable or not. The Cromford cross-roads lie at the foot of the hill, where the old Derby road comes steeply down from Wirksworth and continues forward to the river past the mills. All the Matlock traffic has, of course, long been diverted through the gap on the left which was blasted out of the solid rock. Here is the new Derby road along which we have come from Ambergate—constructed mainly for the convenience of the cotton mills at Belper, Milford and Cromford—and a fifth turns off by The Greyhound, the principal posting house of Cromford in the old days, and still the chief hostelry of the place. This last we take and skirt a large sheet of water, one of the dams which supplied the Cromford Mills with their water power, obtained from a small stream flowing down the Bonsall valley. It is the last of a long series of dams of all shapes and sizes that we shall pass in the next mile, ingeniously devised so that not a drop of water should escape idly into the Derwent. Passing up Scarthin, as the chief street of this side of Cromford is called, and, soon leaving the houses behind, we find ourselves in a narrow valley, where there is no room for more than the road and the grey lagoons of the stream, whose colour suggests that there are factories higher up the vale. The sides of the valley are luxuriantly wooded, but so steep that one can see little save a profusion of green.

The road divides. The right-hand branch would take you to Bonsall in a mile—Bonsall where Kings and Princes are buried, and each man has his own marble bridge over the river. So the old jest ran, followed by the explanation that several families of the name of King and Prince lived in the village, and that a tiny stream runs down the gutter of the principal street. To the left is the road for Newhaven and Ashbourne, known for the first two miles of its leafy course as the Via Gellia. It is a foolish name, foolish because there was absolutely no reason to import the Latin word, and doubly foolish because that word lent itself so easily to corruption.

The Via Gellia has become in common parlance the Via Jelly. But it has occasioned yet another monstrous abuse of language. The name of Viyella, given to a much advertised mixture of woollen and cotton, which is the product of Derbyshire mills, is —*horresco referens* – a corruption of Via Gellia. Its only excuse is that it was perpetrated to satisfy the requirements of the Patent Office. Such are the dangers of introducing classicisms into the vernacular. Yet this unfortunate road was thus named to pay honour to its maker, one of the Gells of Hopton.

I was disappointed with this much-praised highway. Lovely it undoubtedly is, for it lies in a deep ravine, whose limestone sides mount precipitously to a great height and are clad with trees to the very top. Such a road cannot fail to please and the dense mass of varying green gives perpetual delight to the eye. But when that is said one has said all. The ravine keeps an almost constant width and never discloses its full delights. There is no babbling stream, and but few runnels down the hillsides; and when we have passed the paint works and the cluster of cottages by their side we begin to look forward to reaching the end. One gets no horizon in the Via Gellia, and so, beautiful as it is in detail, beautiful even more as it would be if we could see it from above and thus obtain a *coup d'œil* of the whole, I was inclined to think that the people who passed me in their chars-à-bancs were more fortunate than I. Driving either way along this road at a tolerable pace, one would obtain a gracious impression of exquisite trees, and would regret being rushed through so hastily. The pedestrian is always being tantalised with the hope that at the next turn of the road there will be a superb prospect, but the prospect never comes.

At a break in the hills on the left, three miles from Cromford, two roads enter ours around the shoulders of Nimblejack Hill. One of these winds its way to Middleton and Wirksworth; the other turns off at right angles to Hopton, and thence, once more at right angles, to Ashbourne. Our way continues

forward, still hilly and wooded, but the valley broadens, the hills become dwarfed, and the woods grow less dense during the next two miles. Very soon they begin to fail us first on the right and then on the left, and by the time a little inn is reached we see that the road will soon emerge from the deep gorges up which we have been travelling. Passing through the hamlet of Grange Mill—an inn, an old corn mill, and a few cottages bunched together—a long steady rise of nearly three miles takes us up to Winster. The gradient is never severe, but the barrenness of the view becomes fatiguing, for on either hand the sloping ridges prevent all outlook, and are never of sufficient height to become picturesque in themselves. We are unfeignedly thankful, therefore, when we join the old main road from Newhaven, and find ourselves just above Winster. Darley Dale is away on our right; the high ground of Stanton faces us, and on the left are the clumps of the high plateaus near Newhaven. I found more pleasure in looking down upon the delightful little town of Winster, with the fresh breeze blowing cool on the heights, and in recognising around me my familiar landmarks, than in the enclosed valley of the Via Gellia, where the trees, however delightful, could yield nothing more than shade.

Winster is a small market town which lost its old status with the extinction of lead-mining. Its church, on the site of an ancient one, is of mid-Victorian ugliness, though the Georgian tower was left standing. A few old houses survive, the small and weather-beaten Hall in the centre of the town, with pilasters adorned with roses and fleur-de-lis, is the only one of any interest. In the Market Place stand the remains of a market hall, the upper part of which was pulled down in 1904, owing to the dangerously ruinous state into which it had been allowed to fall. It was of brick with stone windows and pointed roof, dating from Jacobean times. The heavy, crude stone arches below, which have not been touched, are probably five centuries old. On the north side of the principal street, about half-way

down, a little lane runs off, issuing at once in a footpath, and dipping down through a succession of fields. Where it branches, keep to the right, and slant up over the hillside towards a farm. There, as you look back, you will see how closely Winster lies huddled up on the hillside, and how curiously it has been built so as to leave a ring of green in the centre. But the feature of the view is the noble sweep of the hills round from Winster to Elton, and the high ground of Harthill Moor, with the tips of the higher ridges showing half a dozen miles further away in the background. Crossing a lane our path continues to mount, till, as it approaches another farm and the big quarries by its side, it swerves to the right, dips to the wood in front and then rises again. Here, before we quit the fields, a large tract of Darley Dale discloses itself, with Matlock Bank at its extremity, and Riber Castle looking up the valley. We can see the road which runs up out of Darley Dale to join the Chesterfield Road from Rowsley, and at our feet is an unhappy chimney with more than its share of attendant horrors. But there are woods everywhere, and they are gracious; in the meadows, where the mowing machine has been busy, the swathes lie in even rows, and the white roads look as alluring and mysterious from a distance as Derbyshire roads always do. A little further on we see where Oaker Hill displays its lone tree, and Masson lifts its stately head.

As we come out into a lane, a gate just opposite gives entrance to the wood. A few yards up, at the foot of a curious group of rocks, the track divides. Take the leftward branch and rejoice to find yourself in a delicious plantation of young fir trees, where every variety of conifer conspires to contribute its own special tint of green. The path lies near the edge of the plantation, on the right hand, and the smooth cropped turf makes pleasant walking, all the more welcome after long miles of high road. We are in the Duke of Rutland's Stanton Moor Plantation, on a high plateau, where, if you search, you may find many oddly shaped rocks of unusual size, a circle of nine

stones, and several tumuli. The small stone circle, eleven yards in diameter, which lies some distance to our left, is called the Nine Ladies, while some thirty yards away stands the solitary King Stone. Just off our path, twenty yards to the right, one of the larger stones is to be found to which the name of the Andle Stone has been given, though this is not the only meaningless title which has been thrust upon it. Deep steps have been cut into it so that those who will may climb to the summit, but the prospect gains nothing from the few additional feet. It stands on the verge of the hill, which here is precipitous, and the whole panorama of Darley Dale is spread out below us—the Darley Dale which some people, alas! are in such great haste to spoil. Quarries, no doubt, there must be, and it is no use bemoaning their presence. But Darley Dale is not the perfect scene it once was, and fifty years hence the laments will be louder, for the scars will be deeper.

A few yards further and we reach the Stand, a square, solidly-built tower, erected by one of the Thornhills of Stanton Hall, which has been more fortunate than its fellow at Crich, inasmuch as it has not attracted to itself the stroke of lightning or of thunderbolt. Over the door is a coronet, with the inscription, "Earl Grey, 1832." The view from here is even more extensive than from the Andle Stone. We not only have Darley Dale below us, but we can look up the Derwent valley beyond Rowsley towards Chatsworth. There is the wild Beeley Moor and the slope of the Lindup Woods, while across the valley is the curious dip wherein lie the Two Dales, which run up to the high moor behind. The long rows of railway sidings at Rowsley are the chief blot upon what otherwise is an exquisite scene. From Stanton Stand make for the detached stone that crowns the next bluff. It, too, has its coronet above a capital Y, and the date 1826. The Y represents "the famous Duke of York," the Duke of the ten thousand men, and of the heavy pillar that overtops the Mall from the level of Carlton House Terrace. He died in the

January of the following year. A broad track runs just below this stone, and all about us are huge quarries. Follow the path as it descends into a meadow, turn to the right where it forks, enter the road and go down the hill. The road bears to the right and then bends sharply to the left, issuing in about three-quarters of a mile in the old steep road from Stanton to Rowsley. Then turn rightwards and descend, with delightful views of the vale of the Wye and the towers of Haddon on your left hand, till these are hidden from sight as you wind round the charming Beacon Tor and drop down into Rowsley.

CHAPTER XXXIII

DERBY

It would be an indignity to leave Derbyshire without visiting its county town. So many sign-posts have pointed us the way thither in our wanderings, so many milestones have impressed on us the varying distances, that to Derby we must go, the more so as we left Glossop and Chesterfield out of our itinerary. Let us, therefore, stroll up into the town, out of the maze of railway sidings, engineering shops, and carriage works, which mark the headquarters of the Midland system. Of antiquities Derby has few remaining. Almost all the old houses are gone—not only the mansions of the gentry, which used to stand in the main streets, but also the picturesque gables of cottages and shops. The Corporation brooms have swept clean. The Roman station was at Little Chester, now a suburb; and Derby was one of the five great Danish towns of the Midlands. King Charles I. slept in a house in the Market Place in 1635, and the Corporation gave him a fat ox, a calf, six sheep, and a purse of gold, wherewith to entertain his friends. Seven years later, after he had raised his standard at Nottingham, he was here again, and borrowed £300 which were never repaid. Throughout the Civil War Derby was for the Parliament—the headquarters, as we have seen, of Sir John Gell, of Hopton.

But the most romantic event in its annals is connected with the invasion of England by Prince Charles Edward in 1745, that forlorn hope which only gained a semblance of justification

from the unpreparedness of the Hanoverian Government and the very indifferent quality of the English generals and troops. But it never had a real chance of success, because the population of England was either actively in favour of the existing *régime*, or, if inclined to sympathise with the Stuart cause, was decidedly disinclined to fight for it. This, however, is not the place for historical dissertation, and the broad outlines of the rebellion and its tragic ending on Culloden Moor are well known. Yet there are many interesting local details which do not find their way into the general history of the reign of George II. Horace Walpole has vividly described in his *Letters* the fever of excitement, not unmixed with very lively fears, into which London was thrown on hearing of the rebel successes in the North. The Government had treated Prince Charlie's landing as a matter of no consequence. They took for granted that his ragged Highlanders would be scattered as soon as they came into touch with the English troops. When, therefore, news came of the capture of Edinburgh and the rout of Johnny Cope, of the advance to Carlisle, and then of the march towards London, confidence gave way to panic. And if that was the feeling in London, what must the good citizens of Derby have felt when they learnt that Prince Charlie and his Highlanders were heading straight for their town? The rebels advanced in two columns, which united at Macclesfield on December 1st. Lord George Murray, advancing with one column to Congleton, drove back a squadron of English horse under the Duke of Kingston, and quite deceived the Duke of Cumberland, whose army lay at Newcastle-under-Lyme, into thinking that the Prince was marching to attack him or trying to pass into Wales. The Duke, therefore, pushed forward to Stone—between Stafford and Stoke—while Lord George Murray slipped to the east and joined the other column under the Prince at Ashbourne. They had thus a free road open to the South, and entered Derby on December 4th without a show of opposition.

Nevertheless, though so little came of it, opposition had been carefully prepared. Derby lay within the sphere of the all-powerful Cavendish influence, which was unreservedly on the side of King George. The Duke raised, at his own expense, a regiment of a hundred and fifty men, and the other county magnates joined the Corporation of Derby in equipping six hundred more. A general subscription list had been opened, and Derby slept in tolerable security, trusting to the valour of these levies. But as soon as it was known that a column of the Highlanders was at Ashbourne—only half a day's march away—terror and confusion reigned in the town. On the night of December 3rd, at about ten o'clock, the drums beat to arms through the streets; the local regiments fell in; the Duke of Devonshire placed himself at their head; and the order was given to march. But instead of taking the Kedleston and Ashbourne road, they took the road to Nottingham. In other words, they marched not against but away from the foe, and Derby was left to its fate. This may have been sound strategy, but it was distinctly disappointing to the burgesses who had subscribed for a force to defend them, and a number of the wealthier inhabitants promptly hid the valuables which they could not take with them in a hasty flight, and made off with their families in the darkness. The Duke of Devonshire and his levies marched by torchlight to Borrowash, midway between Derby and Nottingham, and there, according to a bitter squib published not long afterwards, the Duke harangued his men and said, "Go, refresh yourselves, lest you faint by the way and lest you be slain on empty stomachs." His men obeyed to the letter and "made war upon the poultry: moreover, they did eat and drank much strong drink and departed, forgetting to pay." Whether the irony of the Jacobite lampoon was deserved, we cannot say; but at least the Jacobites themselves did no better, for they cautiously stayed at home.

It was about noon on December 4th when the advanced patrols of the Highland army came into Derby. After seizing

a valuable horse, they went to the George Inn, and demanded billets for nine thousand men. When they asked for the Mayor, they were told that he had fled. Then they inquired for the magistrates. But these too had departed, and some time elapsed before they discovered the sole remaining Alderman, whom they forced to proclaim King James in the market square. It was not exceptional valour which had kept this Alderman in Derby when all his colleagues had fled, for he was too lame to travel. Then the church bells were rung, and bonfires lighted to give the panic-stricken town a look of gaiety, and at two o'clock Lord Balmerino arrived with thirty of the Prince's Life-Guards. "These," says a contemporary historian, "composed the flower of the army, and being dressed in the same uniform, which was blue with scarlet waistcoats trimmed with gold lace, made a fine appearance. They were drawn up in the market-place, where they continued till three o'clock, when Lord Elcho arrived with one hundred and fifty men, the remainder of the Guards. These, upon the whole, were fine figures, but their horses were very much jaded."

Not long afterwards the main army marched into view, six or eight abreast, clad in every conceivable kind of dress, and of all ages and sizes. They were played into Derby by the bagpipes, and eight standard-bearers bore white standards embroidered with large red crosses. The Prince himself did not arrive until dusk, for he had left his army in the forenoon and had ridden over to Radbourne Hall, where he had been in consultation with Mr. German Pole and the leading recusants of the neighbourhood. He was expecting to find there a large sum of money from the Stuart partisans in the Midlands, but the money was not forthcoming, and his disappointment was intense. Subsequently it was discovered that the Derbyshire yeomen to whom it had been entrusted had appropriated it to their own use! Prince Charlie was on foot when he entered Derby; he wore a green bonnet laced with gold, a white bob-wig, and a Highland plaid, and carried a broadsword. He went

direct to the house of Lord Exeter in Full Street, a handsome red-brick mansion which was not pulled down until 1854. His principal officers, the Dukes of Athol and Perth, Lord Balmerino, Lord George Murray, Lord Pitsligo, Lord Nairn and others, quartered themselves in the best houses, and altogether accommodation was found on the first night for 7,098 officers and men.

A council of war was immediately held, at which it was decided to levy all the ready money available, and about £3,000 was obtained. The Prince demanded the proceeds of the land tax, the excise, and the post, while those who had subscribed to the defence fund against the Pretender were now summoned to pay an equal sum against King George. The conduct of the Highlanders was tolerably good. Those who had money paid for what they wanted; those who had none seized what took their fancy. We are told, it is true, that their conduct became "so outrageous that many of the respectable inhabitants concealed themselves," but no specific charges of outrage are laid against them, and the people of Derby fared a good deal better than they had expected. They certainly gave Prince Charlie no voluntary support. The Prince's recruiting sergeants talked big in the inns and at the street corners, and offered five shillings down, and five guineas on arrival at London, to all who would join the white standard with the red cross. But they only secured three recruits, a travelling journeyman blacksmith named Cook, a butcher called Edward Hewitt, and James Sparks, a stocking maker. They were, we are told, "unprincipled and idle fellows, men of degraded lives and sullied character," but the testimony was borne by hostile witnesses, and we may give the three the benefit of the doubt. Probably plenty of young men in Derby had a taste for adventure, but the ragged plaids of the "wild petticoat men" did not inspire much confidence, and the Highlander himself was an alien, speaking an alien tongue and carrying alien weapons. Prince Charlie's army did not look like driving George II.

from his throne, and the Derby folks showed good judgment in holding aloof.

It was fully expected that the rebels would resume their march towards London on December 5th, for a small detachment had been sent forward to hold Swarkeston Bridge over the Trent. But the day passed without a move being made, and in the evening a second council of war was held at the Prince's headquarters in Lord Exeter's house. It was a stormy meeting and the debate was long and angry. The Prince was for going forward and putting everything to the hazard. "Rather than go back," he cried, "I would wish to be twenty feet underground." The cooler members of his staff, especially Lord George Murray, the ablest soldier of them all, were for immediate retreat. Their force was not growing; the English Jacobites were lying snug at home; neither men nor supplies were coming in. The Duke of Cumberland was only two marches away; Marshal Wade was hurrying up at all speed from the North. If they evaded these, there still remained to be faced the army that covered London. The country too was hostile to them, whereas, by withdrawing to Scotland and the hills of Argyle and Inverness, they would at least be fighting amongst friends and on ground which would be as difficult to the enemy as it was familiar to themselves. Such arguments were unanswerable, and the die was cast for retreat. Early on the Friday morning the drums beat to arms and the pipes skirled through the town. Ranks were formed; at seven the army began to move: and then, to the amazement and exultation of the citizens, it was seen that they took the road not to Swarkeston but to Ashbourne. It was also the road to Culloden.

The rebels moved swiftly from Derby to Ashbourne, then on to Leek and Manchester, then through Leigh and Wigan to Preston, where they arrived on December 12th. The last glimpse we get of Prince Charlie is of his having Mass said in All Saints' Church and riding off on a fine black horse which

had belonged to Colonel Gardiner, who fell at Prestonpans. On the retreat, greater licence was allowed to the mounted patrols of the Highland army. They spread out on either flank, stripping the farms of horses, and carrying off considerable loot. At Clifton, near Ashbourne, two of the rebels shot a farmer who had refused to surrender his horse; at Hanging Bridge, an innkeeper was murdered in a brawl. But, on the whole, the countryside escaped very lightly, and the bark of the Highlanders was worse than their bite. Had there been outrage and pillage on the scale of devastation familiar enough even in the nineteenth century, local records would surely have preserved remembrance of it. But no such records exist. Derbyshire was profoundly glad to be rid of the rebel host—at Castleton, for example, which had lain outside their track, the bell-ringers received five shillings for celebrating the retreat with a merry peal—but not many wounds remained to be bound up, and few invasions have resulted in so little bloodshed as the march of Prince Charlie from Carlisle to Derby.

All Saints' Church, where Prince Charlie listened to Mass, possesses a fine sixteenth-century Gothic tower, which, according to local tradition, was built at the sole expense of the Derby bachelors and maidens. We fancy, however, that the benefactions of Robert Liversage, a wealthy dyer, defrayed most of the cost. This tower is in three stages, and 174 feet high exclusive of the pinnacles. The church is of much later date, for it was entirely rebuilt in 1725, and, though not unhandsome in itself, is quite incongruous with the tower. Here is the gorgeous tomb of Bess of Hardwick lying in full state and decked out in all her finery, as becomes the ancestress of dukes and earls and lords of all degrees. Here, too, lies the gallant Colonel Cavendish, slain near Gainsborough in the civil wars: and here are the *disjecta membra* of what must have been the appalling monument of the second Earl of Devonshire, with crude stone figures of himself and his countess, and their sons and daughters. When the church was restored, in 1877,

the monument was taken to pieces. The process might well have been carried a step further. Derby once had a second fine church dedicated to St. Alkmund, but it was cleared away in 1846 and a modern structure of that unfortunate period was set up in its place.

Derby has its associations with Mary Queen of Scots, who

All Saints' Church, Derby.

passed a night in the town on her way to Tutbury Castle in 1584, when she was in the charge of Sir Ralph Sadler. Quarters were found for her in an inn kept by a Mrs. Beaumont, but the name of the hostelry is not known. The landlady and four of her women neighbours were in the hall as the cavalcade approached. The Queen alighted, and then,

with her customary tact, "as soon as she knew who was her hostess, after she had made a beck to the rest of the women standing near the door, she went to her and kissed her and none other, saying that she was come thither to trouble her, and that she also was a widow, and therefore trusted that they should agree well enough together, having no husbands to trouble them, and so went into the parlour upon the same low floor, and no stranger with her but the good wife and her sister." We may be sure that such pleasant affability quite gained the heart of Mrs. Beaumont, and that Queen Mary had one kind soul in Derby to lament her fate. Sir Ralph Sadler took care that no prowling emissaries from France or Spain got word with Queen Mary during her stay in Derby, for he kept a watch all night in the Market Place and at the street corners, and eight of the guards walked up and down before the inn until daybreak, "as myself, lying over against that lodging, can well testify by the noise they made." If they kept Sir Ralph awake, the probabilities are that they also disturbed Queen Mary, but that would trouble neither Sir Ralph Sadler nor his Royal mistress, Queen Elizabeth.

In the eighteenth century, Derby was reputed to be a town of gentry rather than trade. None the less, it enjoys the distinction of having been the home of the first silk mill in England. The art of spinning silk by machinery was an Italian secret, very jealously guarded, until one John Lombe, of Derby, travelled to Italy and succeeded in obtaining by bribery and dishonest means—which he, doubtless, justified to himself as business smartness—models of the machinery then in use. On his return he built a mill on a little island in the Derwent, which was pulled down in 1890 by an unimaginative Corporation. Lombe had a hard struggle. Parliament had granted him a patent for fourteen years, but as the industry was an entirely new one, and his mechanics had never seen the models working, endless modifications and improvements had to be made, with the result that the fourteen years had almost

expired before the mill began to answer Lombe's expectations. He, therefore, appealed to Parliament for assistance, and received a grant of £14,000 on condition that he allowed a complete model to be made of his engines. They were the wonder of all who saw them. Defoe's *Tour* speaks with awe of each Italian engine, containing 26,586 wheels and 97,746 movements, which worked 73,726 yards of silk thread every time the water-wheel went round, and that was three times every minute. "One fire engine," we are told, "conveys warm air to every individual part of the machine, and the whole work is governed by one regulator." Another Derby man, Thomas Roe, introduced the silk industry into Macclesfield, with machines built on the model of those of Lombe. Lombe's fate was tragic. The Italians were so infuriated at his having discovered their secret that they sent over a woman to compass his death. And this, so the story runs, she effected by means of poison.

Derby used also to be famous for the excellence of its ale—a fame in which it has since been superseded by the sister town of Burton. Old Thomas Fuller, Doctor of Divinity, living in the pre-teetotal age, when it was not deemed beneath the dignity of a cleric to be thankful for good liquor, declared that "never was the wine of Sarepta better known to the Syrians, that of Chios to the Grecians, of Falernum to the Latins, than the Canary of Derby is to the English thereabouts." He did not moderate his rapture. "To make malt for drink was a masterpiece indeed! How much of philosophy concurred to the first kill of malt! And before it was tossed on the floor, how often was it tossed in the brain of the first inventor!" No Doctor of Divinity would dare give utterance to such a thought at the present day for fear of the angry protests which would rain in upon him from temperance organisations the world over. In 1691, when the English brewers were alarmed at the growing taste for French claret, a little pamphlet was issued in the shape of "A Dialogue between Claret and

Darby Ale," in which one of the disputants says, "Truly my ordinary liquor is the product of our own country, good, nappy, well-brewed ale; but when I would regale my sense and treat my palate, 'tis generally with a pint or two of Nottingham or Darby." The later editor of Defoe's *Tour*—perhaps the fat little printer novelist, Samuel Richardson himself, who belonged to Derbyshire—notes that "what trade there is in the town, is chiefly in good malt and good ale"; and he also remarks that the further north he went, the better was the brew. From Derby ale to Derbyshire cheese is an easy and natural transition. The latter, also, had a more than local fame, for at the beginning of the nineteenth century it was estimated that nearly two thousand tons of Derbyshire cheese were sent annually to London, and to the ports of the east coast for export to the Continent—a very large trade, considering that it all had to be carried in waggons. The Bakewell cheese fair was far-famed within living memory: now there is hardly a cheese press to be found in the county, save at one or two large manufactories, and though most of the land is laid down in permanent pasture, even the remote country districts use foreign imported butter.

Derby is also the home of the fabled Derby Ram—the ballad in whose praise is said to have been written, in his young days, by Erasmus Darwin—and of the world-renowned "Crown Derby" porcelain. We do not speak of the existing Royal Crown Derby Porcelain Company, which dates back no further than 1877, though the ware which issues from the factory on the Osmaston road takes a high place in the scale of excellence. The old Crown Derby works closed their doors in 1848, when everything came to the hammer as the result of a few years of incompetent management. According to vague tradition, an obscure foreigner was the first to introduce the making of china into Derby, in the shape of little figures, which were sold in the streets. But the early history of the industry is very doubtful until we reach the name of William Duesbury,

of Longton, who in 1755 entered into an agreement with a Derby banker, named Heath, and a china maker, named Planché, to establish a factory in the town. Premises were taken on the Nottingham road, and by 1757 the firm was sending consignments of "Derby figures" to the London sale rooms. The business prospered; it absorbed first the Longton Hall factory, and then, a few years later, the Chelsea and Bow factories. Derby thus secured a virtual monopoly of the best artists and designers; King George paid a visit to the London warehouse in Bedford-street, Covent-garden, and no nobleman thought his table complete without a dessert service of Derby china. Boswell, who visited the factory in 1777, records his admiration of the "ingenuity and delicate art with which a man fashioned clay into a cup, a saucer, or a tea-pot, while a boy turned round a wheel to give the mass rotundity." Johnson, who made one of the party, thought the china was beautiful, but much too dear, "for that he could have vessels of silver, of the same size, as cheap as what were here made of porcelain." Duesbury died in 1785; his son, William Duesbury, the second, died in 1796, after admitting an Irishman, named Michael Kean, into partnership. Then the decline began. Business was still carried on in the name of W. Duesbury, the third, who was a minor, but dissensions arose, and in 1811 the factory was sold to Robert Bloor, a former employé of the firm. The process of degeneration was rapid. Instead of maintaining its name for issuing none but the best work, the factory commenced to turn out cheap and gawdy china for the million. Most disastrous of all was the determination to put on the market the many thousands of imperfect vases, figures and dishes which had been accumulated in the course of years. These were hurriedly touched up for sale, and scattered broadcast over the land to be auctioned for what they would fetch. Such a policy was remunerative for the moment, but it killed the reputation of the factory, and eventually the whole plant was sold in 1848, and the moulds and models scattered to the four quarters of Heaven.

From Derby a pleasant excursion can be made to Quarndon and Kedleston. Quarndon is a pretty little place, which once hoped to become famous as a Spa, but has long outlived its ambitions. Near the top of the village, on the main road, is an ugly, three-sided stone structure, 10 ft. by 8 ft., with an iron entrance-gate. Low down on the left-hand side is a lion's head in iron with a spout in its mouth, out of which drips the water from the spring into an iron cup. Drop by drop it drips with exasperating slowness, for an earthquake in 1896 diverted the main supply, which used to flow from the middle arch in plentiful stream. This iron water, however, was not Quarndon's chief attraction. Its most important spring lay in Kedleston Park, the ancient family seat of the Curzons, about half a mile away through the fields. One Lord Scarsdale evidently believed firmly in the virtues of his sulphur spring, for he built a large inn on the main road for the accommodation of guests. It is a fine, square, three-storied brick building, flanked on either side by a lower range of rooms, and with huge stables at the rear. Opposite, on the fringe of the park, is what was once a handsome bowling green. Lord Denman stayed at the Kedleston Inn three-quarters of a century ago, and describes it as "a large well-looking house but not very handsome within." The parlour where he supped was paved with red tiles, and the floor of his bedroom was of plaster. An ordinary was held for those who came to bathe and drink the waters. But for thirty years and more the Kedleston Inn has been a farmhouse. The water of the sulphur spring was very clear and transparent in a glass, but in the well it looked to be of a blackish-blue colour tinged with purple. Lord Denman compared it with the water of Tunbridge Wells. "In the morning," he says, "I bathed there and found it most agreeably cold, but it did not smell delightfully. The walk to it from the inn is pleasant, and of a sufficient length to create in the invalids a good appetite for breakfast. At present, however, the number of visitors is very small. The bathing house

is a good little building placed among trees so as to be seen to advantage from the great house." It has long been closed, but in the old days it was a place of resort for the citizens of Derby, and we are told that the Kedleston water was actually sold in the town "as a substitute for malt liquor, the charge for carriage being a penny a quart."

Kedleston House is not now shown to the public: it used to be greatly admired. Built by Adams in 1761 for the first Lord Scarsdale, it contains an enormous hall, 67 ft. by 42 ft. and 40 ft. high. Johnson scoffed at it as "a big town hall," when he drove over one day from Ashbourne. What pleased *him* most at Kedleston was to find a copy of his own *Dictionary* in one of the rooms, which prompted him to the vain but very neat quotation of Virgil's line,

Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?

Government House at Calcutta was copied from Kedleston House, a circumstance which has proved especially happy and appropriate during the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon of Kedleston, the most distinguished representative which the Scarsdale branch of the Curzon family has produced, and also one of the ablest Viceroys who have governed the great Dependency, and have not shrunk from initiating sweeping changes and reforms.

And so back to Derby, and from Derby back to the London which one is rarely loth to leave, yet to which, after absence, one is never reluctant to return.

And what is writ is writ,
Would it were worthier!

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